Ed Bolton Year 1728
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. CHAUCER (GEOFFREY). The Woorkes of Geffrey ucer, newly printed, with diuers additions, which were euer in printe before. With the siege and destruction of the worthy citee of Thebes, compiled by John Lidgate, Monk of Berie, as in the table more plainly doeth appear. *Woodcuts.* Folio, old calf, red edges.

[Colophon]: Imprinted at London, by John Kyngston for Jhon Wight, 1561

Black letter in double columns. Rare. The fourth collected edition, edited by John Stowe, the historian. This edition has upon the title a woodcut of the armorial bearings of Chaucer, and the title to the Canterbury Tales is enclosed within a large cut representing the family trees of John, Duke of Lancaster, and Edmund, Duke of York; there is also a woodcut at the head of the Knight's Tale. The Lefferts-Poor copy, with bookplates.

The woorkes of Geffrey Chaucer, newly printed, with diuers addicions, whiche were neuer in printe before: With the siege and destruccion of the worthy citee of Thebes, compiled by Jhon Lidgate, Monke of Berie. As in the table more plainly dooeth appere.

Edw.d Bolton
year

Edw.d Bolton
1728. Twenty Eight

Skinner
Dec. 7, 1934
A.

The Prologue.

To the kinges highnesse, my most gracious soueraigne lorde, Henry the eight, by the grace of God, kinge of Englande, and of Fraunce, defensor of the Faithe, and Lorde of Irlande. &c.

AMonges al other excellēcyes, most gracious souerain lorde, wher with almightye god hath endowed mankinde, aboue the residue of erthely creatures, as an outwarde declaracion of reason or reasonablenesse, wherin consisteth the similitude of man vnto aungeles, and the difference betwene the same and brute beestes, I verayly suppose, that speache or langage is nat to be reputed, amonges the smallest or inferiours. For therby is expressed the conceite of one to another, in open and plaine sentence, whiche in the residue of lyuelye creatures, lacketh & is not shewed amonges them, but by certain couerte and derke signes, and that in fewe thynges, hauing course and operation onely of nature. This speache or langage, after the confusiō of tonges, sente by goddes punisshement for pride and arrogācie of people, hath been by a certaine inclyncte and disposition natural, diuised and inuented in sundry partes of the worlde, as felowshippes or companynges of folkes one with another, chaūced moche to the outward expressing of the thing in worde or sounde, according to that wherof it had meaninge or signification. But in processe of time, by diligence or polycie of people, after dyuers fourmes, fygures, and impressions in metal, barkes of trees, & other mater vsed for memorye and knowlege of thynges, than present or passed, sondry letters or carectes were firste amonges the Phenices dyuised and founde, with soche knittynges and ioyninges of one to another, by a marueilous subtilyte and crafte, as counterueiled was & is equiualent to the same langages. So as ỹ conceite of mannes minde, whiche at the beginninge was vsed to be declared by mouthe onely, came to soche point, that it was as sensibly and byuely expressed in writynge. Herupon ensewed a greate occasion and corage vnto them that shoulde write, to cōpone and adorne, he rudenesse and barbariete of spech, and to forme it to an eloquent and ordinate perfection, wherunto many, and many great Poetes and Oratours haue highly employed their studies and corages, leauing therby notable Renoume of them selues, and example perpetuell to their posterite. Amonges other, the Grekes in all kindes of sciences, semed so to preuaile, and so to ornate their tonge, as yet by other of right noble langages, can nat be perfitely imitated or folowed. The Latins by example of the Grekes, haue gotten or wonne to them no small glorye, in the fourminge, order, and bttring of that tonge. Out of the whiche two, yf it be well searched, that is to say, Greke and Latyn (thoughe by corrupcion of speche it should seme moche other wise) haue ben deriued the residue of the langages, that be written with the letters or carectes, of eyther of them bothe: But of al speches, those whiche most approche to the latinite, be the Italian and Spanish tonges, of whome the one by corrupcion of the Gothes and Longobardes had her beginning, as Latin spoken by straungers of a barbare vnderstandinge. The other beinge also Latyn was by Vandales, Gothes, Moores, Sarracenes, and other so many times blemished, as marueyle it is to se nowe, vnto what perfeccyon these two formed out of the Latyn and barbares speches be reduced. Nexte vnto them in similitude to the Latin is the Frenche tong, whiche by diligence of people of the same, is in fewe yeres passed so amended, as well in pronunciacion as in writinge, that an Englishman by a small tyme exercysed in that tōg, hath nat lacked ground to makes grammere, or rule ordynarye thereof. Though of trouthe (whych some shal scarsely beleue) the Germains haue so fourmed the order of their langage, that in the same, is bothe as moche plentie and as nere concordaūce to the phrase of the Latin, as the Frenche tonge hath. And verailye, like as al these and the rest haue ben thus bigilant and studious, to meliorate or amende their langages: so hath there nat lacked amonges vs Englishemen, whiche haue right well and notablye endeuoired and employed them selues, to the beautifiyng & bettringe of the Engiysche tonge.

Amonges whome mooste excellent prince, my mooste redoubted and gracious soueraygn lorde, I your mosse humble vassall, subiecte & seruaunte Wyllyam Thynne, chefe clerke of your kechin, moued by a certaine inclinacion and zele, which I haue, to heare of any thing sounding to to the laude and honour of this your noble realme, haue taken great delecta-

cion, as the times and laisers might suffre, to rede and here the bokes of that noble and famous clerke Geffray Chaucer, in whose workes is so manyfolde comprobacion of his excellente lerninge, in al kindes of doctrines and sciences, soche frutefulnesse in wordes, well accordinge to the mater and purpose, so swete and plesaunte sentences, soche perfection in metre, the compolycyon so adapted, sothe freshenesse of inuencion, compendiousnesse in narration, soche sensible and opē stile, lacking neither maiestie ne mediocritie, couenable in dispolicion, and soche sharpenesse or quicknesse in conclusion, that it is moche to be marualled, howe in his time, whan doutlesse al good letters were laid a slepe throughout the worlde, as the thing, which eyther by the dispolicion and influence of the bodyes aboue, or by other ordinaunce of God, semed lyke as was in daunger to haue vtterlye perysshed, soch an excellente Poete in our tong, should as it were (nature repugninge) spring and arise. For thoughe it had been in Demosthenes or Homerus tymes, whan al lerning and excellencie of sciences, florished amonges the Grekes, or in the seasō that Cicero prince of eloquence, amonges Latins lyued, yet had it been a thinge right rare and straunge, and worthy perpetuall laude, that any clerke by learninge or witte, could that haue framed a tonge before so rude and imperfite, to soche a swete ornature and compolicion, lykely if he had liued in these dates, being good letters so restored and reuined as they be, if he were nat empeched by the enuie of soche as maye tollerate nothynge, whiche to vnderstonde their capacite dothe nat extende, to haue broughte it vnto a full and finall perfection. Wherfore gracious soueraigne lorde, takinge soche delite and pleasure in the workes of this noble clerk (as is afore mencioned) I haue of a long season moch vsed to rede and visite the same, and as bookes of diuers impryntes came vnto my handes, I easely and without greate studye, myght and haue deprehended in them many errours, falsyties, and deprauacions, which euidently appered by the contrarietes and alteracions founde by collacion of the one with the other, wherby I was moued & stired to make diligent serche, where I might fynde or recouer anye trewe coppes or examplaries of the said bookes, whereunto in processe of time, nat without cost and paine, I attained, and nat onely vnto soche as seme to be very trewe copies of those workes of Geffray Chaucer, whiche before had ben put in printe, but also to diuers other neuer tyll nowe imprinted, but remaninge almoste vnknowen and in obliuion, wherupon lamentinge with my self, the negligence of the people, that haue been in this realme, who doutlesse were verye remisse in the settinge forthe or auauncement, eyther of the histories ther of, to the great hynderaunce of the Renoume of soch noble princes & valiant conquerours and capitaines, as haue been in the same, or also of the workes of memorye of the famous and excellente clerkes in all kindes of sciences, that haue florished therin. Of whiche bothe sortes it hathe pleased God as hyghly to nobilitate this yle, as any other region of christendome: I thought it in manere appertenaunt vnto my dewty, and that of very honesty and loue to my coūtrey, I ought no lesse to do, than to put my helpinge hande to the restauracion and bringinge againe to lighte of the said workes, after the trew copies and examplaries aforesaid. And deuisinge with my selfe, who of al other were most worthy, to whom a thinge so excellent & notable should be dedycate, which to my conceite semeth for the admiracion, noueltie, and straungenesse, that it might be reputed to be of in the tyme, of the authour, in comparison, as a pure and fyne triede precious or policed iewell, oute of a rude or in digeste masse or matere, none could to my thinking occurre, that sins, or in the time of Chaucer, was or is sufficient, but only your maieste royal, whiche by discrecion and iudgement, as moste absolute in wisedome and al kindes of doctrine, coulde and of his innate clemēcie and goodnesse, wold adde or gēue any auctorite here vnto.

For this cause most excellent, and in al vertues most prestante prince, I as humbly prostrate before youre kinglie estate, lowely supply and beseche the same, that it woll vouchsafe to take in good parte my poore study, & delirous minde, in reducinge vnto light this so precious and necessary an ornament, of the tonge of this youre realme, ouer pitous to haue ben in anye point lofte, falsified, or neglected: So that vnder the shylde of your most royall protection and defence, it may go forthy in publike and preuail ouer those that wolde blemishe, deface, and in many thinges clerely abolishe the laude, renoume, and glorie here tofore compared, and meritoriously adquired by diuers princes, and other of this said moste noble yle, wherunto nat onelye straungers

vnder

vnder preterte of high learnyng, & knowlege of their malicious, and peruers mindes, but also some of your owne subiectes, blinded in folie and ignorannce, dooe with greate studie contende. Moste gracious, victorious, and of God moste elect and worthie prince, my moste dread souerain lorde, in whom of verie merite, duetie, and succession, is renued the glorious title of Defensor of the Christen faith, which by your noble progenitour, the Greate Constantine, somtime kyng of this Realme, and Emperor of Rome, was next God & his Apostles, chiefly maintained, corroborate, and defended: almightie Jesu send to your highnes, the continuall and euerlastyng habundaunce of his infinite grace. Amen.

¶ Thus endeth the Preface.

¶ A Table of all the

names of the woorkes, conteigned in this volume.

¶ The Preface.

THe Canterburie tales. i.
The Romant of ỹ Rose. ii.
Troilus and Creseide. iii.
The testament of Cres. iiii
The Legende of good women, with a balade. v.
Boecius de Consolacione Philosophie. vi.
The dreame of Chaucer, otherwise called the boke of the Duches, or Seis and Alcione, with a balade to his master Bucton. vii.
The assemble of Foules. viii.
The floure of Curtesie, with a balade. ix.
Howe Pitee is dedde, and buried in a gentill harte. x.
La belle dame sans mercie. xi.
Annelida and faise Arcite. xii.
The assemble of Ladies xiii.
The conclusion of the Assralabie. xiiii.
The complainte of the blacke knight, otherwise called the cõplaint of a louers life. xv.
A praise of women. xvi.
The house of Fame. xvii.
The Testament of Loue. xviii.
The lamentacion of Mary Magdalein. xix.
The remedie of Loue. xx.
The complaint of Mars and Venus. xxi.
The complaint of Mars alone. xxii.
The complaint of Venus alone. xxiii.
The letter of Cupide. xxiiii.
A balade of our Ladie. xxv.
A balade to kyng Henry the fowerth. xxvi.
Of the Cuckowe and the Nightingale. xxvii.
Scogan vnto the yong Lordes and gentilmen of the kynges house. xxviii.
A balade of good counsaile by Chaucer. xxix.
Diuers other goodly balades &c. xxx.
A balade of good counsaile, made by Jhon Lidgate. xxxi.
A balade, teaching what is gentilnes. xxxii.
A balade against vnconstant women. xxxiii.
How all thing in this worlde is variable, saue women onely. xxxiiii.
The crafte of Louers. xxxv.
A pleasaunt balade of women. xxxvi.
The. x. commaundementes of loue. xxxvii.
The. ix. Ladies worthie. xxxviii.
Diuers other goodlie balades & verses. xxxix.
The Court of Loue, compiled by Chaucer. xl.
The siege and destruccion, of the worthie Citee of Thebes, compiled by Jhon Lidgate of Burie. xli.

☞ Thus endeth the first Table, and here folowethy the seconde.

¶ In this table ye maie finde anything that ye woll haue in this volume by the Folio, as folowethy.

☞ The Prologues of the Canterberie tales.

THe Knightes tale. Fol. Primo
The Millers tale. Fol. xi.
The Reues tale. Fol. xv.
The Cokes tale. Fol. xvi.
The mã of lawes tale. Fo. xviii
The Squiers tale. Fol. xxiii.
The Marchauntes tale. Fol. xxvii.
The wife of Bathes Prologue. Fol. xxxii.
The wife of Bathes tale. Fol. xxxvi.
The Frères tale. Fol. xxxviii.
The Sompnours tale. Fol. xl.
The Clerke of Oxenfordes tale. Fol. xliii.
The Frankeleines tale. Fol. l.
The seconde Nonnes tale. Fol. liiii.
The Prologue of ỹ Chanõs yoman. Fol. lvii.
The Doctour of Phisikes tale. Fol. lxi.
The Pardoners Prologue. Fol. lxiii.
The Pardoners tale. eodem.
The Shipmannes tale. Fol. lxvi.
The Priores Prologue. Fol. lxviii.
The Priores tale. eodem.
The rime of sir Topas. Fol. lxix.
The tale of Chaucer. Fol. lxxi.

The Table.

The Monkes Prologue. Fol lxxx.
The Monkes tale. Fol.lxxxi.
The tale of the Nonnes preest Fol.lxxxv.
The Manciples tale. Fol.lxxxviii.
The Plowmannes tale. Fol.xc.
The Parsones Prologue Fol.xcvii.
The Persones tale. eodem.

¶Explicit Canterburie tales.

The Romaunt of the Rose. Fol.Cxvi.

¶Troilus and Creseide, is deuided into fiue bookes.

The first booke beginneth. Fol.Cli.
The seconde booke beginneth. Fol.Clvii.
The thirde booke beginneth. Fol.Clxvi.
The fowerth booke beginneth. Fol.Clxxvi.
The fiueth booke beginneth. Fol.Clxxxiiii.

☞Explicit Troilus and Creseide.

The Testament of Creseide. Fol.Cxciiii.

¶The Legende of good women hath all these folowyng.

The Prologe. Fol.Cxcvii.
The legende of Cleopatras. Fol.CC.
The legende of Tisbe of Babilone. eodem.
The legende of Quene Dido Fol.CCi.
The legēd of Hipsiphyle & Medea. Fol.CCiii.
The legende of Lucrece of Rome. Fol.CCv.
The legende of Ariadne. Fol.CCvi.
The legende of Philomene. Fol.CCvii.
The legende of Phillis. Fol.CCviii.
The legende of Hypermestra. Fol.CCix.

☞Explicit the legende of good women.

¶Boecius de Consolacione, is deuided into fiue bookes.

The first booke beginneth. Fol.CCx.
The seconde booke beginneth. Fol.CCxv.
The thirde booke beginneth. Fol.CCxvi.
The fowerth booke beginneth. Fol.CCxvix.
The fiueth booke beginneth. Fol.CCxxiiii.

☞Explicit Boecius de consolacione.

¶All these woꝛkes folowyng be woꝛkes by them self.

The dreame of Chaucer called the Duchesse. Fol.CCxliii.
The assemble of Foules. Fol.CCxliiii.
The Floure of Curtesie. Fol.ccxlviii.
How pitie is dedde. &c. fol.ccxlix.

La belle dame sans mercie. fol.ccl.
Anelida and false Arcite fol.cclv.
The assemble of Ladies fol.cclvii.
The conclusion of the Assralaby. Fol.CCLxi.
The complaint of the black knight. fol.cclxx.
A praise of women. fol.cclxxiii.

☞The house of Fame is deuided into three bookes.

The first booke beginneth. fol.cclxxiiii.
The seconde booke beginneth. fol.cclxxvii.
The thirde booke beginneth. fol.cclxxix.

¶Explicit the house of Fame.

¶The Testament of Loue, is deuided into three bookes.

The first beginneth. fol.cclxxxv.
The seconde booke beginneth. fol.ccxcv.
The thirde booke beginneth. fol.cccvii.

¶All these woꝛkes folowyng, be woꝛkes by themself.

The lamentacion of Mary Mag. fol.cccviii
The remedie of Loue. fol.cccxi.
The cōplaint of Mars & Venus. fol.cccxiiii.
The complaint of Mars a lone. fol.cccxv.
The complaint of Venus a lone. fol.cccxvi.
The letter of Cupide eodem.
A balade of our Ladie. fol.ccc.xix.
A balade to kyng Henry the.iiii. fol.cccxx.
Three saiynges of dan Jhon Lid. fol.cccxxii
Of the Cuckow and the Nyght. fol.cccxxiii.
Scogan vnto the yong Lordes and gentilmen of the kynges house. fol.cccxxiiii.
Diuers other balades of Chaucer. &c.
A balade of good counsaile, made by Jhon Lidgate. fol.cccxxvii.
A praise or commendacion of Chaucers eloquence. eodem.

¶Diuers other woꝛkes of Chaucers, neuer before imprinted, as hereafter folowety.

A balade, teaching what is gētilnes. Fo.cccxl
A prouerbe against couetise, & negligēce. eodē
A balade against vnconstant women. eodem.
How all thing in this worlde is variable, saue women onely. eodem.
The crafte of Louers. fol.cccxli.
A pleasaunt balade of women. eodem.

The

Eight Questions,

The.x.cõmaundementes of loue. Fol.cccxlii.
The.ix.Ladies worthie. eodem.
Certaine balades. Fol.cccxliii.
How Mercurie with three goddesses,appered to Paris. Fol.cccxliiii.
A balade pleasaunt. eodem.
The discriuyng of a faire Ladie. eodem.
A balade warning men to beware of deceiptfull women. eodem.
Certain verses compiled by Chaucer.fol.ccc. and xxxix.
A balade declaryng the worthinesse of womens chastitee. eodem.
The courte of Loue. Fol.cccxlviii.
Chaucers wordes to Adam his owne Scriuener. Fol.ccclv.
The Prologue of the storie of Thebes. ccclvi.
The first part of ỹ siege of Thebes.fo.ccclvii.
The seconde parte of the siege of Thebes. Fol.ccclxi.
The.iii.part of the siege of Thebes.ccclxviii.

Thus endeth the table of all the worthes.

Eight goodlie

questions, with their answers.

SOmtime in Grece,that noble region
There were eight clerkes, of greate science
Philosophers, of notable discrecion
Of whom was asked, to proue their prudence
Eight questions, of derke intelligence
To whiche thei answered,after their entent
As here doeth appere,plaine and euident.

The first question, what yearthly thing
Is best,and to God moste comendable
The first clerke answered, without tariyng
A mannes soule,euer ferme and stable
In right,from trouthe not variable
But now alas,full sore maie we wepe
For couetise hath brought trouthe a slepe.

The seconde,what thing is moste odious
A double man saied the Philosophre
With a virgine face,and a taile venomous
With a faire vieu,and a falce profre
A corrupte carien,in a golden tree
It is a monster,in natures linage
One man to haue a double visage.

The thirde,what is the best dower
That maie be to a wife appropriate
A clene life,was the clerkes answer
Without sinne,chast,and inuiolate
From all disceiptes,and speaches inornate
Or countenaunce,whiche shall be to dispise
No fire make,and no smoke woll arise.

The fowerth question,what maiden maie
Be called clene in chastitie
The fowerth clerke answered,which alwaie
Euery creature,is ashamed on to lie
Of whō euery man reporteth greate honestie
Good maidens kepe your chastite forthe
And remēbre that good name is gold worthe

Who is a poore man euer full of wo
A couetouse man,whiche is a nigon
He that in his herte,can neuer saie ho
The more good,the lesse distribucion
The richer,the worse of condicion
Men in this cost,clepen him a nigarde
Sir Guy the bribour,is his stewarde.

Whiche is a riche man, without fraude
He that can to his good suffise
Whatsoeuer he hath,he yeueth God the laude
And kepeth him clene,from all couetise
He desireth nothing,in vngoodly wise
His body is here,his minde is aboue
He is a riche man,for God doeth him loue.

Who is a foole,is the seuenth demaunde
He that would hurte,and hath no po'were
Might he withall, moche would he cōmaunde
His malice greate,his might nought were
He thinketh full faste, full little maie he dere
Thinketh not how,men haue saied before
God sendeth a shrewde Cowe,a short horne.

Who is a wise man, is the eight question
He that might note,and doeth no notaunce
Might punishe, and leaueth punission
A man mercifull, without vengeaunce
A wise man putteth in remembraunce
Saiyng,had I venged all mine harme
My cloke had not be furred, halfe so warme.

Explicit.

To

The Prologues,

¶ To the kinges moste noble grace, and to the Lordes and knightes of the Garter.

YOu wele of honor and and of worthinesse
Our Christen Kynge, the heire and successoure
Unto Justinians deuoute tenderneſſe
In faithe of Jesu, our redemptour
And to you lordes, of the Garter floure
Of chevalrie, as men you clepe and call
The lorde of vertue, and of grace aucthour
Graunt the fruict of your lose, neuer appall.

O liege lorde, that haue ehe the likeneſſe
Of Constantine, thensample and mirrour
To princes all, in humble burumneſſe
To holy churche, o veray sustainour
And piller of our faithe, and werriour
Again the heresies bitter Galle
Doe forthe doe forthe, continue your socour
Holde vp Christes baner, let it nat falle.

This Ile or this, had been but Hethneſſe
Had be of your faithe, the force and vigoure
And yet this daie, the fendes crabbidneſſe
Weneth fully, to catche a tyme and houre
To haue on vs your lieges, a sharpe shoure
And to his seruitude, vs knitte and thralle
But aye we trust in you, our protectour
On your constaunce, we awaiten alle.

Cōmaundeth that no wight, haue hardineſſe
O worthy king, our Christen Emperour
Of the faithe, to dispute more or leſſe
Openly emong people: Her errour
Springeth all daie, and engendreth rumour
Maketh soche lawe, & forought maie befall
Obserue it wele, there to be ye dettour
Doeth so, and God in glorie shall you stall.

Ye Lordes eke, shinyng in noble fame
To whiche appropred is, the maintenaunce
Of Christes cause, in honour of his name
Shoue on, and put his foes to vttraunce
God would so, so would eke your legiaunce
To tho twoo, pricheth you your duetie
Who so nat kepeth, this double obseruaunce
Of merite and honour, naked is he.

your stile saieth, ye be foes to shame
Now kith of your faithe, the perseueraunce
In whiche an heape of vs, be halte and lame
Our christen king of Englande & of Fraunce
And ye my lordes, with your aliaunce
And other faithfull people, that there be
Trust I to God, shal quenche al this noisaūce
And this lande set, in high prosperite.

Conquest of high prowesse is for to tame
The wilde woodnesse, of these miscreaunce
Right to the rote, repe ye that same
Slepe nat this, but for Goddes plesaunce
And his mother, and in significaunce
That ye been of, sainct Georges liuere
Doeth him seruice, and knightly obeisaunce
For Christes cause is his, well knowen ye.

Stiffe stande in that, & ye shall greue & grame
The foe to peace, the norice of distaunce
That now is erneſt, tourne it in to game
Now kithe of your beleue the constaunce
Lorde liege, and lordes haue in remembraūce
Lorde of all is the blisfull Trinitee
Of whose vertue, the mightie habundaunce
You herte and strength, in faithfull vnitee.

Explicit.

WHan faithe failleth in prestes sawes
And lordes hestes are holden for lawes
And robberie is holden purchace
And lecherye is holden solace
Than shall the londe of Albion
Be brought to greate confusion.

It falleth for euery gentilman
To saie the best that he can
In mannes absence
And the sothe in his presence
It cometh by kinde of gentill blood
To caste awaie all heuinesse
And gader togider woordes good
The werke of wisedome beareth witnesse.

Finis.

The

The Launterburie tales, &

KYNGE HENRY THE VIII.
HENRY DVKE OF SOMERSET
KYNG HENRY THE VII.
EDWARD SONNE OF KYNG RYCHARD THE THYRD.
QVENE ELYZABETH
MARGARET COVNTES RYCHMOND
R.D. OF YORKE
K. HENRY VI
K. RYCHARD III.
HENRY DVKE OF SOMERSET
K. HENRY V
K. EDWARD IIII.
R.D. OF YORK
GEORGE D. OF CLARENCE
K. EDWARD V
EDMVNDERLE OF SOMERSET
R. HENRY VIII.
ELIANOR DOVGHTER TO THE ERLE OF MARCH
IOHN DVKE OF SOMERSET
R. ERLE OF CAMBRYG.
IOHN DVKE OF LANCASTRE.
IOHN ERLE OF SOMERSET.
EDMVND DVKE OF YORKE.

The Prologues.

WHen that Aprill with his shoures sote
The drought of Marche had perced the rote
And bathed euery vaine in soche licoure
Of whiche vertue, engendred is the floure.
When zephirus eke with his sote breth
Enspired hath euery holte and heth
The tendre croppes, and the yong sonne
Hath in the Ram halfe his course ronne
And smale foules maken melodie
That slepen al night with open eye
So pricketh hem nature in her courage
Than longen folke to go on pilgrymage
And palmers to seken straunge strondes
To serue halowes couthe in sondry londes
And specially fro euery shyres ende
Of Englonde to Canterbury they wende
The holy blisful martir for to seke
That hem hath holpen, when they were seke

IT befell that season on a day
In Southewarke at the Tabarde as I lay
Redie to go in my pilgrimage
To Caunterbury with deuoute courage
That night was come into that hostelry
Well nine and twenty in a company
Of sondrie folke by auenture yfal
In felishyp, and pilgrimes were they al
That toward Caunterbury wolde ride
The chambres and stables weren wyde
And well weren they esed at the best
And shortely whan the sonne was at rest
So had I spoken with hem euerychone
That I was of her felishyp anone
And made forward early for to rise
To take our way ther as I you deuise
But nethelesse, while I haue time and space
Or that I ferther in this tale pace
Me thinke it accordaunt to reason
To tel you al the condicion
Of eche of hem so as it semed me
And whiche they were, and of what degre
And eke in what araye that they were in
And at a knight then wil I first begin

The knight. i.

A Knyght there was & that a worthy mā
That fro the time that he firste began
To ryden out, he loued cheualrie
Trouthe, honour, fredom, & curtesie
Full worthy was he in his lordes warre
And therto had he ridden no man so farre
As well in christendome as in Hethinesse
And euer had honoure for his worthinesse
At Alisaundre he was whan it was won
Ful ofte time he had the bourde begon
Abouen al nations in Prusse
In Lettowe had he ridden and in Luce
No christen man so ofte of his degree
In Garnade at the siege had he be
At Algezer, and riden in Belmarie
At Leyes was he, and also at Satalye
Whan they were wonne, and in the great see
At many a noble armye had he be
At mortall batailles had he bene fiftene
And foughten for our faith at Tramissene
In listes thries, and aye slaine his foo
This ilke worthy knight had ben also
Somtime with the lorde of Palathye
Ayenst another Hethen in Turkye
And euermore he had a soueraine prise
And though he was worthy he was wise
And of his porte as meke as is a maide
He neuer yet no vilanye ne saide
In al his life, vnto no maner wight
He was a verey perfite gentil knight
For to tell you of his aray
His horse were good, but he was nothing gay
Of fustyan he wered a gipon
All besmottred with his Haubergion
For he was late come fro his viage
And wente for to done his pilgrimage

The Squier. ii.

WIth him there was his sonne a yong squire
A louer and a lusty Bachelere
With his locches crull as they were laid in presse
Of twenty yere of age he was as I gesse
Of his stature he was of euen length
And wonderly deliuer, and of great strength
And he had be somtyme in chyuauchie
In Flaundres, in Artois, and in Picardie
And borne him wel, as of so litel space
In hope to stande in his ladyes grace
Embrouded was he, as it were a mede
Al ful of freshe floures, white and rede
Singing he was, or floiting al the daye
He was freshe as is the moneth of Maye
Short was his gowne, w sleues long & wyde
Wel coude he sitte on a horse, and faire ride
He coude songes make, and wel endite

Iuste and eke daunce, portray and welle writ
So hote he loued, that by nighter tale
He slept nomore then doth the Nightingale
Curteis he was, lowly and seruysable
And kerfte before his Fader at the table

¶The Squieres yoman. iii.

A Yoman had he and seruauntes no mo
All that time, for him liste to ride so
And he was clad in cote and hode of grene
A sheef of Pecocke arowes bright and shene
Under his belt he bare ful thriftely
Wel coude he dresse his tackle yomanly
His arowes drouped not with fethers lowe
And in his hande he bare a mighty bowe
A notte heed had he, with a browne visage
Of wodde craste, wel couth he all the vsage
Upon his arme he bare a gay bracer
And by his side a swerde and a bokeler
And on that other side a gay daggere
Harneised well, and sharpe as pointe of spere
A Christofer on his brest of Siluer shene
An horne he bare, the baudrike was of grene
A forster was he soothly as I gesse

¶The Prioresse. iiii.

THere was also a Nonne a Prioresse
That of her smiling was symple and coye
Her greatest othe was by saint Loye
And she was called dame Eglentine
Ful wel she songe the seruice deuine
Entewned in her nose ful semely
And Frenche she spake ful fetously
After the scole of Stratforde at bowe
For Frenche of Paris was to her vnknowe
At meate was she well ytaught withall
She let no morsel fro her lippes fal
Ne wete her fingers in her sauce depe
Wel couth she carye a morsel and wel kepe
That no drop ne fel vpon her brest
In curtesy was set ful moche her lest
Her ouerlip wiped she so clene
That in her cup was no ferthinge sene
Of grece, whan she dronken had her draught
Full semely after her meate she raught
And sikerly she was of great disporte
And ful plesaunt, and amiable of porte
And pained her to counterfete chere
Of courte, and be statelyche of manere
And to ben holden digne of reuerence
But for to speake of her conscience
She was so charitable and so pitous
She wolde wepe yf that she sawe a mous
Caught in a trappe, if it were deed or bledde
Of smale houndes had she that she fedde
With roste flesshe, mylke, or wastel breed
But sore wepte she yf any of hem were deed
Or yf men smote hem with a yarde smarte
And al was conscience and tender harte
Ful semely her wymple pinched was
Her nose tretes, her eyen gray as glas
Her mouth smale, and therto softe and reed
But sykerly she had a faire forehed
It was almost a span brode I trowe
For sothe she was not vndergrowe
Ful fetise was her cloke as I was ware
Of smale Coral about her arme she bare
A paire of bedes, gauded al with grene
And theron honge a broche of golde full shene
On whiche ther was first writē a crowned. A
And after that (Amor vincit omnia)
Another Nonne with her had she
That was her chapelein, and preestes three

¶The Monke. v.

A Monke there was, faire for the maistry
An out ryder, that loued venery
A manly man to ben an abbot able
Ful many a deinte horse had he in stable
And whan he rode men might his bridel here
Gingeling in a wisteling winde as clere
And eke as loude, as doth the chapel bel
There as this lorde was keper of the sel
The rule of saint Maure and of saint Benet
Bycause it was olde and somdele streit
This ilke Monke let olde thinges pace
And held after the new worlde the space
He yaue not of the texte a pulled henne
That saith, that hunters be not holy men
Ne that a Monke whan he is recheleſſe
Is likened to a fishe that is waterlesse
This is to say, a Monke out of his Cloistre
This ilke texte held he not worthe an oystre
And I say his opinion was good (wood
What should he studye, and make him selfe
Upon a booke alway in Cloister to powre
Or swinke with his handes, or labowre
As Austin bid, how shal the worlde be serued

Let

Let Austin haue his swinke to him reserued
Therfore he was a pricksoure a right
Greihoūdes he had as swift as foule of flight
Of prickinge and of huntinge for the hare
Was al his lust, for no coste wolde he spare
I sawe his fleues purfled at the hande
With Grece, and that the finest in a lande
And for to faste his hoode vnder the chinne
He had of golde wrought a curious pinne
A loue knot in the greater ende there was
His heed was balde, and shone as any glas
And eke his face, as he had ben anointe
He was a lorde full fat and in good pointe
His eyen slepe, and roling in his heed
That stemed as a furneis of a leed
His bootes sowple, his hors in great estate
Now certainly he was a faire prelate
He was not pale as a forpined ghost
A fatte swan loued he best of any rost
His Palfray was browne as is a bery

¶ The Frere. vi.

A Frere ther was a wanton and a mery
A lymytour, a full solempne man
In all the ordres foure is none that can
So moche of daliaunce and faire langage
He had made ful many a mariage
Of yong women at his owne cost
Until his order he was a noble post
Ful welbyloued, and familier was he
With frankelins ouer al his countre
And with worthy women of the toun
For he had power of confessioun
As he said him selfe, more than a curate
For of his order he was licenciate
Ful swetly herde he confessyon
And plesaut was his absolucion
He was an easy man to giue penaunce
There as he wist to haue a good pitaunce
For vnto a poore ordre for to giue
Is signe that a man is well yshriue
For yf he gaue, he durst make auaunt
He wist that a man was repentaunt
For many a man is so harde of herte
That he may not wepe though him smerte
Therfore in stede of wepinge and prayeres
Men mote giue siluer to the poore freres
His tippet was aye fassed ful of kniues
And pinnes, for to giue faire wiues
And certainly he had a mery note
Wel coude he singe and plain on a rote
Of yedding he bare vtterly the price
His necke was white as the floure delice
Therto stronge he was as a champioun
And knewe the tauernes wel in euery toun
And euery hosteler and tapstere
Bet than a lazer or a beggere
For vnto soche a worthy man as he
Accordeth naught, as by his faculte
To haue with lazers soche acquaintaunce
It is not honest, it may not auaunce
For to dele with soche poraile
But al with riche, and sellers of vitaile
And ouer al there as profite should arise
Curteis he was, and lowly of seruice
There nas no man no where so vertuous
He was the best begger in his hous
And gaue a certaine ferme for the graunte
None of his brethren came in his haunte
For though a widowe had but a shoo
(So plesaunce was his In principio)
Yet wolde he haue a ferthing or he went
His purchase was better than his rent
And rage he couthe as it were a whelpe
In louedaies there coude he mykel helpe
For there he was nat like a cloisterere
With a threde bare cope, as a poore frere
But he was like a maister or a pope
Of double worstede was his semy cope
So rounded was as a bel out of presse
Somwhat he lysped for his wantonnesse
To make his Englishe swete vpon his tonge
And in harping, whan he had song
His eyen twinkeled in his hed a right
As done the sterres in a frosty night
This worthy frere was called Huberde.

¶ The Marchaunt. vii.

A Marchaunt was there with a longe berde
In motley, on hygh on his horse he sat
Upon his heed a Flaunders beuer hat
His bootes clasped faire and fetously
His reasons he spake ful solempnely
Shewinge alway ẏ encrease of his winning
He wolde the see were kept for any thing
Betwixe Meddel borough and Orewel
Wel coude he in eschaunge sel
This worthy man ful wel his wit byset
Ther wist no wight that he was in dette
So stately was he of his gouernaunce
With his bargeyns, and with his cheuisaūce
Forsothe he was a worthy man withal

But soothly to sain, I not what men him call

¶The Clerke of Oxenforde viii.

A Clerke ther was of Oxenforde also
That vnto Logike had longe ygo
As leane was his horse as a rake
And he was nothing fat I vndertake
But looked holowe, and therto soberly
Ful thredbare was his ouer courtpy
For he had yet getten him no benefice
Ne was nought worthy to haue none office
For him was leuer to haue at his beddes heed
Twenty bookes, cladde with blacke or reed
Of Aristotle, and of his Philosophie
Than robes riche, or fiddell, or gay sautrie
But all be that he was of a Philosophre
Yet had he but litel golde in cofre
But al that he might of his frendes hent
On bookes and on lerning he it spent
And besily gan for the soules pray
Of hem that yelpen him to scholay
Of studie toke he most cure and hede
Not a worde spake more than nede
And that was said in fourme and reuerence
And short and quicke, and of hie sentence
Sowning in moral vertue was his speche
And gladly wolde lerne, and gladly teche

¶The Sergiant at lawe, ix.

A Sergiant of lawe, ware and wise
That often had ben at the peruise
That was also ful riche of excellēce
Discrete he was, and of greate reuerence
He semed such, his wordes were so wise
Justice he was ful often in assise
By patent, and by plaine commission
For his science, and his hie renoun
Of fee and robes had he many one
So great a purchasour was no where none
Al was fee simple to him in effecte
His purchasing might not be to him suspect
No where so bisy a man as he there nas
And yet he semed bisier than he was
In termes had he case and domes al
That fro the tyme of king William was fall
Therto he coude endite, and make a thing
There coude no wight pinche at his writing
And euery statute coude he plaine by rote
He rode but homely in a medly cote
Girt with a seint of silke, with barres smale
Of his array, tell I no lenger tale

¶The Frankelin. x.

A Frankeleyn there was in his Companie
White was his berde, as is the deyse
And of his complexion he was sanguine
Wel loued he by the morow a soppe in wyne
To lyuen in delite was euer his wonne
For he was Epicures owne sonne
That held opinion, that plaine delite
Was very felicite perfite
An housholder, and that a great was he
Saint Julian he was in his countre
His bread, his ale, was alway after one
A better viended man was no where none
Without bake meate was neuer his house
Of fishe and flesche, and that so plenteouse
It snewed in his house of meate and drynke
Of al deintes that men coude thinke
After the sondre seasons of the yere
So chaunged he his meate and his suppere
Full many a fatte Partriche had he in mewe
And many a Breme, and many a luce in stewe
Wo was his Cooke, but his sauce were
Poynante and sharpe, and redy al his gere
His table dormaunt in his hall alway
Stode redy couered al the longe day
At sessions there was he lorde and sire
Full often time he was knight of the shire
An anelace and gipsere al of silke
Hing at his girdle, white as morow milke
A sheriffe had he ben, and a countour
Was no where such a worthy vauasour

¶The Haberdasher xi.

An Haberdasher there was and a carpenter
A webbe, a dier, and a tapiser
Al they were yclothed in o liuere
Of a solempne and a great fraternite
Ful freshe and newe her geare ypiked was
Her knives ychaped were not with bras
But al with siluer wrought full clene & wele
Her girdeles and her pouches euery dele
Wel semed euerich of hem a faire burgeis
To sitten at a yelde hal, on the hye deys
Euerych for the wisedome that he can
Was shapelych for to ben an alderman

For

For cattaile had thei right inough and rent
And eke her wiues, would it well assent
And els certaine, thei were to blame
It is full faire, to been icleped madame
And gone to vigilies all before
And haue a mantell, roialliche ivore.

¶ The Cooke. xii.

A Cooke thei had with hem, for the nones
To boile the Chickens, and the marie bones
And pouder marchaunt, tarte and galingale
Well coud he know, a draught of London ale
He couthe roste, sethe, boile, and frie
Make mortreis, and well bake a pie
But greate harme was it, as it thought me
That on his shinne, a mormall had he
And blanke manger, made he with the best.

¶ The Shipman. xiii.

A Shipman was there, wonnyng ferre by West
For aught I wotte, he was of Derthmouthe
He rode vpon a rouncie, as he couthe
In a goune, of faldyng to the knee
A dagger hangyng, by a lace had he
Aboute his neche, vnder his arme doune
The hot sommer, had made his hew all broune
And certain he was, a good felawe
Full many a draught of Wine, had he drawe
Fro Burdeux ward, while the chapmen slepe
Of nice conscience, tooke he no kepe
If that he faught, and had the higher hande
By water he sent hem home, to euery lande
But of his crafte, to reken well his tides
His stremes and his daungers hym besides
His herbrough, his Mone, & his lodemanage
There was none suche, from Hul to Cartage
Hardie he was, and wise to vndertake
With many a tempest, had his berde be shake
He knewe all the hauens, as there were
Fro Scotlande, to the Cape de fenestere
And euery creke, in Britain and in Spain
His barge was called the Maudelain.

¶ The doctor of Physike. xiiii.

With vs there was, a Doctoure of Physike
In all this worlde, ne was there none hym like
To speake of Physike, and of Surgerie
For he was grounded, in Astronomie
He kept his pacient, a full greate deel
In houres, by his Magike naturell
Well couthe he fortune, the ascendent
Of his Image, for his pacient
He knewe the cause, of euery maladie
Were it of colde, heate, moiste, or drie
And whereof engendred, what humour
He was a verie parfite practisour
The cause know, & of his harme the roote
Anone he gaue, to the sicke man his boote
Full readie had he, his Apoticaries
To sende hym drugges, and his lectuaries
For eche of hem, made other for to winne
Her frendship, nas not newe to beginne
Well knewe he, the olde Esculapius
And Dioscorides, and eke Rufus
Olde Hippocrates, Haly, and eke Galien
Serapion, Razis, and also Auicen
Auerrois, Damascene, and Constantin
Bernarde, Gatisden, and Gilbertin
Of his diete, mesurable was he
For it was of no superfluitee
But of greate nourishyng, and digestible
His studie was, but little on the Bible
In sanguine and in perce, he clad was all
Lined with Taffata, and with Sendall
And yet he was, but easie of dispence
He kept that he wan, in tyme of Pestilence
For golde in Physike, is a cordiall
There he loued, golde in speciall.

¶ The wife of Bathe. xv.

A Good wife there was, beside Bathe
But she was some deale dese, & that was scathe
Of cloth making, she had soche an haunte
She passed hem of Ipre, or of Gaunte
In all the Parishe, wife ne was there none
That to the offryng, before her should gone
And if there did, certain wrth wroth was she
That she was all out of charitee
Her kerchers full fine were of grounde
I durst sweare, thei waiden ten pounde
That on a Sondaie, were vpon her hedde
Her hosen were, of fine scarlet redde
Full straite istrained, and shoes full newe
Bolde was her face, and redde was her hewe
She was a worthie woman, all her liue
Husbandes at the churche doore, had she fiue
Withouten other companie in youthe
But therof nedeth, not to speake as nouthe

And thrise had she been, at Jerusaleme
She had passed, many a strong streme
At Rome had she been, and at Boloine
In Galis at sainct James, and at Coloine
She couth moche, of wandryng by the waie
Gat tothed was she, sothly for to saie
Upon an ambler, easely she satte
Ywimpled well, and on her hedde an hatte
As brode as is a bokeler, or a targe
A foote mantell, aboute her hippes large
And on her feete, a paire of spurres sharpe
In felowship, well couth she laugh and carpe
Of remedies of loue, she coud perchaunce
For she couth of that arte, the olde daunce

The Parsone. xvi.

A Good manne there was, of religion
And was a poore Parsone of a toun
But riche he was, of holie thought and werke
He was also a learned man, and a clerke
That Christes Gospels truly would preache
His parishens, deuoutly would he teache
Benigne he was, and wonder diligent
And in aduersitie full pacient
And soche he was proued oft sithes
Full lothe were hym, to curse for his tithes
But rather would he, yeuen out oft doubt
Unto his poore parishens aboute
Of his offeryng, and of his substaunce
He couthe in little thing, haue sufficiaunce
Wide was his parishe, & houses fer a sonder
But he ne left, neither for raine ne thonder
In sickenesse ne in mischief for to visite
The ferrest in his parishe, moche or lite
Upon his feete, and in his hande a staffe
This noble ensample, to his shepe he yaffe
That first he wrought, & afterward taught
Out of the Gospell, he the wordes caught
And this figure he radde eke thereto
That if golde rust, what should Iron do
For if a preest be foule, on whom we trust
No wonder is, a leude man to rust
And shame it is, if a preest take kepe
To se a shitten shepherde, and a cleane shepe
Well ought a preest, ensample for to yeue
By his clennesse, how his shepe should liue
He set not his benefice to hire
And let his shepe, acomber in the mire
And renne to London, to sainct Poules
To seken hym a Chauntrie for soules
Or with a brotherhede, to be witholde
But dwelt at home, and kept well his folde
So that the Wolfe, ne made hem not miscary
He was a shepherde, and not a mercenarie
And though he holie were, and vertuous
He was not to sinfull men dispitous
Ne of his speache, daungerous ne digne
But in his teachyng, discrete and benigne
To drawen folke to heauen, with fairenesse
By good ensample, this was his business
But if he were any persone obstinate
Whether he were, of hie or lowe estate
Hym would he snibbe, sharply for the nonis
A better preest I trowe, no where none is
He waited after, no pompe ne reuerence
Ne maked hym, no spiced conscience
But Christes lore, and his Apostles twelue
He taught, but first he folowed it hym selue.

The Plowman. xvii.

With hym there was a Plowman his brother
That had ilad of dong, many a fother
A true swinker, and a good was he
Liuyng in peace, and perfite charitee
God loued he beste, with all his harte
At all tymes, though hym gamed or smarte
And then his neighbours, right as hymselfe
He would threshe, and thereto dike and delfe
For Christes sake, for euery poore wight
Without en hire, if it laie in his might
His tithes paied, he full faire and well
Bothe of his proper swinke, and of his cattel
In a tabarde he rode, upon a Mare
There was also a Reue, and a Millare
A Sompnour, and a Pardoner also
A Manciple, and my selfe, there was no mo.

The Miller. xviii.

THE Miller was a stoute carle for the nones
Full bigge he was of braune, and eke of bones
That proued well, for ouer all there he came
At wrastling he would, haue awaie the Ram
He was short shouldered, a thicke gnarre
There nas no doore, but he would heue of bar
Or breake it, at a rennyng with his hedde
His berde as any Sowe or Fore was redde
And thereto brode, as it were a spade
Upon the coppe, right of his nose he hade
A werte, and thereon stode a tufte of heeres
Redde as the bristles, of a Sowes eares
His nostrels blacke were and wide

A swerde and a bucheler, bare he by his side
His mouthe as greate was, as a furneis
He was a iangler, and a goliердeis
And that was moste of sinne, & of harletrise
Well couthe he steale corne, and tolde it thrise
And yet he had, a thombe of golde parde
A white coate, and a blewe hode weared he
A baggepipe, well couth he blowe and soune
And therwithall, brought he vs out of toune

The Manciple. xix.

A Gentle Manciple there was, of the Temple
Of whiche all Catours, might taken ensemple
For to been wise, in buiyng of vitaile
For whether he paied, or tooke by taile
Algate he waited, so in his achate
That he was aye before, in good estate
Now is not that of God, a full faire grace
That soche a leude mannes wit, shall pace
The wisedome, of an heape of learned men
Of maisters had he, mo then thrise ten
That were of Lawe experte, and curious
Of whiche there was, a dosen in that hous
Worthie to been stewardes, of rent and lande
Of any Lorde, that is in Englande
To maken hym liue, by his proper good
In honour debtlesse, but if he were wood
Or liue as scarsly, as hym list desire
And able to helpen, all a shire
In any case, that might fallen or happe
And yet the Manciple, set all her cappe.

The Reue. xx.

THE Reue was a slender Colerike man
His beарde was shaue, as nye as euer he can
His heere was by his eares round ishorne
His toppe was docked, like a preest beforne
Full long were his legges, and full lene
Ilike a staffe, there was no Calfe isene
Well couth he kepe, a Garner and a Binne
There was none Auditour, coud on him win
Well wist he by the drought, and by the raine
The yelding of his seede, and of his graine
His Lordes Shepe, his Nete, and his Deirie
His swine, his hors, his store, and his pultrie
Were holly in his Reuis gouernyng
And by his couenaunt, yaue he rekenyng
Sith his Lorde, was twentie yere of age
There coud no man, bring hym in arerage
There nas Bailie, Herde, ne none other Hine
That he ne knewe, his sleight and his couine
Thei were a dradde of hym, as of the death
His dwelling was, full faire vpon an heath
With grene trees, shadowed was his place
He couth better, then his Lorde purchace
Full riche he was, astored priuely
His Lorde he coud, well please subtilly
To yeue and lene hym, of his owne good
And haue a thank, and yet a coate and a hood
In youth he had, learned a good miстere
He was a well good wright, a Carpentere
This Reue satte vpon a right good stot
That was all pomell grey, and highte Scot
A long surcote of perce, vpon he hade
And by his side, he bare a rustie blade
Of Norfolke was this Reue, of whiche I tell
Biside a toune, men clepen it Baldeswell
Tucked he was, as is a Frere aboute
And euer he rode, hinderest of the route.

The Sompnour. xxi.

A Sompnour was there, with vs in the place
That had a fire redde Cherubins face
For sawsleme he was, with yen narowe
As hote he was, and lecherous as a sparowe
With scaled browes blacke, and pilled berde
Of his visage, children were sore afferde
There nas quicksiluer, Litarge, ne brimstone
Borace, Ceruse, ne oile of Tarter none
Ne ointment that would clense or bite
That hym might helpe, of his whelkes white
Ne of his knobbes, sittyng on his cheekes
Well loued he Garlike, Onions, and eke lekes
And for to drinke strong wine, redde as blood
Then would he speak, & crie as he were wood
And when he had, well idronke the wine
Then would he speake, no worde but Latine
A fewe termes had he, twoo or three,
That he had learned, out of some degree
No wonder is, he heard it all the daie
And ye knowen wel eke, how that a Jaie
Can clepe watte, as well as can the pope
But who so couth, in other thing hym grope
Then had he spent, all his Philosophie
(A questio quid iuris) would he crie
He was a gentill harlot and a kinde
A better felowe, should a man not finde
He would suffer, for a quarte of wine
A good felowe, to haue his concubine
A twelue monthe, and excuse hym at the full
Full priuely eke, a Finche couth he pull

And

And if he fonde o where a good felawe
He would teache hym to haue none awe
In soche case, of the archedekins curse
But if mannes soule were in his purse
For in his purse, he should ipunished be
Purse is the archdeakens hell, saied he
But well I wotte, he lied right in dede
Of curlyng, ought eche synfull man drede
For curlyng woll slea, right as assoiling saueth
And also ware hym, of significauit
In daunger had he at his owne gise
The yong girles of the Diocise
And knewe her counsaile, and was of her red
A garlonde had he set vpon his hed
As greate as it were for an alestake
A bukeler had he maked hym of a cake

The Pardoner. xxii.

With hym there rode, a gentle Pardonere
Of Rouncevall, his frende and his compere
That straight was com, fro the courte of Rome
Full loude song he, come hider loue to me
This Sompnour bare hym a stiffe burdoun
Was neuer Trompe, of halfe so greate a soun
This Pardoner, had heer as yelowe as ware
But smoth it hyng, as doeth a stricke of flare
By vnces hing, his lockes that he had
And therewith, he his shulders ouerspradd
But thinne it laie, by culpons one and ons
But hode for iolite, weared he none
For it was trussed vp in his walet
Hym thought he rode, all of the newe iet
Dischevilde, saue his cappe he rode all bare
Soche glaryng yen had he, as an hare
A vernacle had he, sowed vpon his cappe
His wallet beforne hym, in his lappe
Bret full of pardon, come from Rome al hote
A voice he had, as smale as hath a Gote
No berde had he, ne neuer should haue
As smothe it was, as it were newe shaue
I trowe he were, a geldyng or a Mare
But of his crafte, fro Berwike vnto Ware
Ne was there soche, an other pardonere
For in his male, had he a pillowe bere
Whiche as he saied, was our Ladies vaile
He saied he had, a gobbet of the saile
That sainct Peter had, when that he went
Vpon the sea, till Jesu Christ him hent
He had a crosse of Latine, full of stones
And in a glasse, he had Pigges bones
But with these relikes, when that he fonde
A poore Parsone, dwellyng vplonde
Vpon a daie, he gat hym more money
Then that Parsone, gat in monethes twey
And thus with fained flatteryng and iapes
He made the Parson, and the people his apes
But truly to tellen at the last
He was in the Churche, a noble Ecclesiast
Well couthe he rede, a lesson or a storie
But alderbest, he sang an offitorie
Full well he wist, when that song was song
He must preache, and well a file his tong
To winne siluer, as he well coud
Therefore he song, so merily and loude.
Now haue I tolde you soothly in a clause
The state, the araie, eche nomber, & eke ỹ cause
Why that assembled was this companie
In Southwerke, at this gentell hostelrie
That hight the Tabarde, fast by the Bell
But now is tyme, to you for to tell
How that we baren vs, that ilke night
When we weren, in that hostrie alight
And after woll I tell, of our voiage
And all the remnaunt, of our Pilgrimage
But first I praie you, of your curtesie
That ye ne arette it not my follie
Though that I, plainly speak in this matter
To tellen you her wordes, and eke her chere
Ne though I speake, her wordes properly
For this ye knowen, as well as I
Who shall tellen a tale, after a man
He mote rehearse, as nye as euer he can
Eueriche worde, if it been in his charge
All speake he neuer so rudely ne large
Or els he mote tellen his tale vntrue
Or feine thinges, or finde wordes newe
He maie not spare, altho he were his brother
He mote as well saie o worde, as an other
Christ spake hym self, full brode in holy writ
And well I wotte no villanie is it
Eke Plato saieth, who so can hym rede
The wordes mote been, cosin to the dede
Also I praie you, forgeue it me
All haue I not, sette folke in her degre
Here in this tale, as thei should stande
My wit is short, ye maie well vnderstande.

Greate chere made our hoste, vs euerichone
And to the Supper, sette he vs anone
And serued vs, with vitaile at the beste
Stronge was the wine, & well drinke vs leste
A semely man, our hoste was with all
For to been a marshall, in a lordes hall
A large man he was, with yen stepe

A fairer burgeis is there none in Chepe
Bolde of his speche, wise and wel ytaught
And of manhode him lacked right naught
Eke therto he was a right mery man
And after supper plaien he began
And spake of mirthe amonge other thinges
Whan that we had made our rekeninges
And said thus, nowe lordinges truely
Ye ben to me well come right hertely
For by my trouth if I shoud not lye
I sawe nat this yere so mery a companye
Atones, in this herborowe as is nowe
Fain wolde I don you mirth and I wist how
And of a mirth I am right nowe bethought
To don you ease, and it shall coste nought
Ye gone to Canterbury God mote you spede
The blisful martir quite you your mede
And wel I wot as ye gone by the way
Ye shapen you to talken and to play
For trewly comforte ne mirth is there none
To riden by the way as dombe as a stone
And therfore wolde I maken you disporte
As I said erst, and done you some comforte
And yf you liketh al by one assent
For to stonden at my iudgement
And for to worchen as I shal you say
To morowe whan we riden on the way
Now by my fatheer soule that is deed
But ye be mery I woll giue you my heed
Hold vp your handes withont more speche
Our counsail was not longe for to seche
Us thouzt it was not worth to make it wise
And graunted him without more auise
And bad him say his verdit as him lest
Lordinges (q̃ he) now herkeneth for the best
But take it nat I pray you in disdaine
This is the point to speke it plat and plaine
That eche of you to shorte with others way
In this viage, shal tell tales tway
To Canterbury warde I meane it so
And homwardes he shal tel tales other two
Of auentures whilom that han befal
And whiche of you that bereth him best of al
That is to saine, that tellen in this case
Tales of best sentence and most solace
Shal haue a supper at oure alder cost
Here in this place sitting by this post
Whan that we comen ayen from Canterbury
And for to make you the more mery
I wil my seluen goodly with you ride
Right at mine owne cost and be your gide
And who that wol my iudgement withsay
Shal pay al that we spende by the way
And yf ye vouchsafe that it be so
Tel me anone without wordes mo
And I wol erly shape me therfore
This thing was graunted & our othes swore
With glad hert, and praiden him also
That he wolde vouchsafe for to do so
And that he wolde ben our gouernour
And of our tales iudge and reportour
And set a supper at a certaine prise
And we wollen ben demed at his deuise
In hie and lowe, and thus by one assent
We ben accorded to the iudgement
And therupon the wine was fette anon
We dronken, and to rest wente ylke one
Withouten any lenger tariyng
A morowe whan the daie gan to spring
Up rose our host, and was our alder cocke
And gathered vs al in a flocke
And forth we riden a litel more than paas
Unto the watering of saint Thomas
And there our host began his horse arest
And said: lordes herkeneth yf you lest
Ye wote your forwarde, and I it recorde
If eue songe and morowe songe accorde
Let se nowe who shal tel the first tale
As euer I mote drinke wine or ale
Who so is rebel to my iudgement
Shal paye for al that by the way is spent
Nowe draweth cut or that ye farther twin
The which that hath the shortest shal begin.
Sir knight (q̃ he) my maister and my lorde
Nowe draweth cutte, for that is mine acorde
Cometh nere (q̃ he) my lady Prioresse
And ye sir Clerke, let be your shamefastnesse
Ne studieth not, lay hande therto euery man
Anone to drawe euery wight began
And shortely for to tellen as it was
Were it by auenture, or by shorter caas
The sothe is this, the cutte fil to the knight
Of whiche ful blith & glad was euery wight
And tellen he must his tale as it was reason
By forwarde, and by composicion
As ye han herde, what nedeth wordes mo
And whan this good man saw that it was so
As he that wise was and obedient
To kepen his forwarde by his fre assent
He said, sithen I shal begin the game
What welcome cutte a goddesname
Now let vs ryde, and herkeneth what I say
And with ẏ worde we riden forth our way
And he began with a right mery chere
His tale anone, right as ye shal here.

¶ Thus endeth the prologues of the Caunterbury tales, and here foloweth the knightes tale.

WHylom, as olde stories tellen vs
There was a Duke that hight Theseus
Of Athenes he was lorde and gouernour
And in his tyme suche a conquerour
That greater was non vnder the son
Full many a riche countrey had he won
What with his wisedome, and his cheualry
He conquered all the reigne of Feminy
That whylom was icleped Cythea
And wedded the quene Ipolita
And brought her home w̄ him into his cōtre
With mykell glory and solempnyte
And eke her ponge suster Emely.
And thus with victory and melody
Let I this worthy duke to Athenes ride
And all his host, in armes him beside.
And certes, if it nere to longe to here
I woulde haue tolde fully the manere
How wonnen was the reigne of Feminy
By Theseus, and by his cheualry
And of the great batail for the nones
Betwene Athenes and Amasones
And how beseged was Ipolita
The ponge hardy quene of Cithea
And of the feest, that was at her wedding
And of the tempest at her home comming
But all ỹ thing, I mote as nowe forbere
I haue god wotte, a large felde to ere
And weked ben the oxen in the plowe
The remenant of my tale is longe ynowe
I will nat letten eke, non of this rout
Let euery fellowe tell his tale about
And let se nowe, who shall the supper wyn
And there I lefte, I will againe begyn.
This duke, of whom I make mencioune
When he was come, almost to the towne
In all his wele and his most pryde
He was ware, as he caste his eye aside
Where that there kneled in the highe wey
A company of ladys, twey and twey
Eche after other, cladde in clothes blacke
But suche a crie, and suche a wo they make
That in this worlde, nys creature liuing
That euer herde suche a waymenting
And of this crie, they nolde neuer stenten
Tyll thei the reines of his bridell henten
What folke be ye, ỹ at myn home comming
Perturben so my feest with cryeng
Quod Theseus? Haue ye so great enuy
Of mine honour, that thus complaine & cry?
Or who hath you misbode, or offended?
Nowe telleth me, if it maie be amended
And why that ye be clothed thus in blacke?
The oldest lady of them all spake
When she had sowned with a deedly chere
That it was ruthe for to se and here
She said lorde, to whom fortune hath yeue
Victory, and as a conquerour to lyue
Nought greueth vs your glory and honour
But we beseke you of mercy and socour.
And haue mercy on our wo and distresse
Some drope of pyte, through thy gentilnesse
Upon vs wretched wymen, let thou fall
For certes lorde, there nys none of vs all

That she ne hath be a duchesse or a quene
Nowe be we caytifes, as it is well iſene
Thanked be fortune, and her falſe whele
That non estate assureth for to be wele.
Nowe certes lord, to abyde your presence
Here in this temple of the goddesse Clemence
We haue be waiting all this fourtenight
Helpe vs lorde, sythe it lieth in thy mighte.

Iwretche, that wepe and waile thus
Whylom wife to king Campaneus
That starke at Thebes, cursed be ỹ day
And all we that ben in this aray
And maken all this lamentacion
We losten all oure husbondes at that town
Whyle that the siege there aboute laie
And yet the olde Creon (wel awaie)
That Lorde is nowe of Thebes cite
Fulfilled of yre and of iniquite
He for dispite, and for his tiranny
To done the deed bodies villany
Of all our lordes, whiche that ben slawe
Hath al the bodies on an heape ydrawe
And will nat suffre hem, by none assent
Neither to be buried, ne to be brent
But maketh houndes to eate hem in dispite
And with that worde, without more respite
They fallen grofly, and crien pitously
Haue on vs wretched wymen some mercy
And let our sorowe sinke in thine hert.
This gētle duke downe frō his horse stert
With hert pitous, whan he herde hem speke
Him thought that his hert wolde breke
Whan he sawe hem so pitous and so mate
That whylom were of so great astate
And in his armes, he hem all vp hent
And hem comforted in full good entent
And swore his othe, as he was true knight
He wolde don so ferforthly his might
Upon the tirante Creon hem to wreake
That al the people of Grece shulde speake
Howe Creon was of Theseus yserued
As he that hath his deth full well deserued
And right anon withouten more abode
His baner he displayed, and forth rode
To Thebes warde, and al his hoost beside
No nere Athenes nolde he go ne ride
Ne take his ease fully halfe a daye
But onward on his way that night he laye
And sent anone Ipolita the quene
And Emely her yonge suster shene
Unto the towne of Athenes to dwell
And forth he rideth, ther nys no more to tel

The red statu of Mars with spere & targe
So shineth in his white baner large
That al the feldes glyttren vp and doun
And by his baner, borne is his penon
Of golde ful riche, in which there was ybete
The mynotaure, that he wan in Crete
Thus rideth this duke, this conquerour
And in his hoste of chiualry the flour
Till that he came to Thebes, and alight
Faire in a felde, ther as he thought to fight
But shortly for to speken of this thing
With Creon, whiche was of Thebes king
He faught, and slewe him manly as a knight
In plaine bataile, and put his folke to flight
And at a saute he wan the cite after
And rente adowne wall, sparre, and rafter
And to the ladies he restored agayn
The bodies of her husbandes that were slain
To done obsequies, as tho was the gise
But it were all to longe for to deuise
The great clamour, and the weymenting
That the ladies made at the brenning
Of the bodies, and the great honour
That Theseus, the noble conquerour
Doth to ỹ ladies, whan they from him went
But shortly to tellen is mine entent
Whan ỹ this worthy duke, this Theseus
Hath Creon slaine, and wan Thebes thus
Still in the felde he toke all night his rest
And did with al the countre as him lest
To ransake in the taas of bodies dede
(Hem for to stripe of harneys and of wede)
The pillours did her busines and cure
After the bataile and the discomfiture
And so befel, that in the taas they founde
Thorough girt with many a greuous woūde
Two yonge knigtes lyeng by and by
Both in armes fame, wrought full richely
Of whiche two, Arcite hight that one
And that other hight Palamon
Not fully, quiche, ne fully deed they were
But by her cote armours, and by her gere
The heraudes knewe hem best in speciall
As tho that weren of the bloode riall
Of Thebes, and of sistren two yborne
Out of the taas the pillours hath hem borne
And han hem caried softe in to the tent
Of Theseus, and he ful sone hem sent
To Athenes, to dwellen there in prison
Perpetuell, he nolde hem not raunson
And whan this worthy duke had thus idon
He toke his hoost, and home he gothe anon
With laurer crouned, as a conquerour
And there he liueth in ioye and honour
Terme of his life, what nedeth wordes mo?
And in a toure, in anguishe and in wo
Dwelleth Palamon, and his felowe Arcite

For

for euermore, there may no gold hem quite.

Thus passeth yere by yere, & day by day
Till it fell ones in a morowe of May
That Emely, that fayrer was to sene
Than is the lylly, vpon the stalke grene
And fresher than May, with floures newe
For with the rose colour strofe her hewe
I not whiche was the fayrer of them two
Er it was day, as was her won to do
She was arisen, and all redy dight
For May woll haue no slogardy a night
The season pricketh euery gentell herte
And maketh it out of ther slepe sterte
And saythe arise, and do May obseruaunce
This maketh Emely to haue remembraūce
To done honour to May, and for to rise
I clothed was she fresshe for to deuise
Her yelowe heare was broided in a tresse
Behinde her backe, a yerde longe I gesse
And in the gardyn at sonne vprist
She walketh vp and downe as her list
She gathereth floures, party white and reed
To make a subtell garlande for her heed
And as an angell, heuenly she song
The great tour, that was so thicke & strong
Whiche of the castell was the chefe dungeon
Wherin the knightes were in prison
Of whiche I tolde you, and tell shall
Was euyn ioynaunt to the garden wall
There as this Emely had her playeng
Bright was the sonne, & clere the morning
And Palomon this wofull prisoner
As was his won, by leaue of his gayler
Was risen, and romed in a chambre on highe
In whiche he all the noble cite sighe
And eke the gardyn, full of braunches grene
There as this fresshe Emely the shene
Was in her walke, and romed vp and doun.
This sorowfull prisoner, this Palamon
Gothe in his chambre roming to and fro
And to him selfe complayning of his wo
That he was borne, full ofte said alas
And so befell by auenture or caas
That through a window thick of many a bar
Of yren great, and square as any spar
He cast his eyen vpon Emilia
And therwith he blent and cried, ha.
As though he stongen were to the herte.
And with that crie Arcite anon vp sterte
And sayd, cosyn myne, what eyleth the
That art so pale and deedly for to se?
Why crieste thou? who hath do the offence?
For goddes loue, take all inpacience
Our prison, for it maie none other be
Fortune hath yeuen vs this aduersite
Some wicked aspect or disposicion
Of Saturne, by some constellacion
Hath yeuen vs this, although we had it swore
So stode the heuen, when that we were bore
We mote endure this is short and playn.
This Palamon answered, & sayde agayn:
Cosyn forsoth, of this opinion
Thou hast a vaine imagination
This prison caused me not to crye
But I was hurt right now through myne eye
Into mine hert, that woll my bane be
The fayrnesse of a lady that I se
Yonde in the gardyn, roming to and fro
Is cause of all my cryeng and wo
I not wher she be woman or goddesse
But Venus it is, soothly as I gesse
And therwith all on knees down he fyll
And said: Venus, if it be thy wyll
You in this garden, thus to transfigure
Before me, sorowfull wretched creature
Out of this prison helpe that we may scape
And if our desteny be so shape
By eterne worde, to dyen in prison
Of our lynage haue some compassion
That is so lowe ybrought by tiranny.
And with that worde Arcite gan espy
Where as the lady romed to and fro
And with that sight her bewte hurt him so
That if that Palamon were wounded sore
Arcite was hurt as moche as he, or more
And with a sighe he said pitously
The fresshe beutie sleeth me sodenly
Of her that rometh in yonder place
And but I haue her mercy and her grace
That I may seen her at the leste way
I nam but deed, there nys no more to say.

This Palamon, whā he these wordes herd
Dispitously he loked, and answerd:
Whether sayest thou this in ernest or in play
Nay quod Arcite, in ernest by my fay
God helpe me so, me list ful yuell to ply
This Palamon gan knit his browes twey
It were (quod he) to the no great honour
To be false, ne for to be traytour
To me, that am thy cosyn and thy brother
I swore full depe, and eche of vs to other
That neuer for to dyen in the payne
Till that the deth departe vs twayne
Neither of vs in loue to hinder other
Ne in none other case my leue brother
But that thou shuldest truly further me
In euery case, as I shulde further the
This was thyn othe, and myn also certayn

I wote it well, thou darst it not withsayn
Thus art thou of my counsell out of doubte
And nowe thou woldest falsly ben aboute
To loue my lady, whom I loue and serue
And euer shall, till that myn herte sterue.
Now certes false Arcite thou shalte not so
I loued her first, and tolde the my wo
As to my counsell, and to my brother swore
To further me, as I haue tolde before
For whiche thou art ibounden, as a knight
To helpen me, if it lye in thy might
Or els arte thou false, I dare well saine.
This Arcite full proudly spake againe,
Thou shalt (quod he) be rather false than I
And thou arte false I tell the vtterly.
For paramour I loued her first or thou
What wilte ỹ sain, thou wist it nat or nowe
whether she be woman or goddesse
Thyne is affection of holinesse
And mine is loue, as to a creature
For whiche I tolde the myn auenture
As to my cosyn, and my brother swore.
Suppose that thou louedst her byfore
Wost thou not well the olde clerkes sawe:
That who shal giue a louer any lawe:
Loue is a gretter lawe by my pan
Than may be yeuen to any erthly man
And therfore posityfe lawe, and suche decre
Is broken all day for loue in eche degre
A man mote nedes loue maugre his heed
He may nat flee it though he shuld be deed
All be she mayde, widowe, or wife
And eke it is not lykely all thy life
To stonden in her grace, nomore shall I
For well thou wost thy selfe verely
That thou and I be dampned to prison
Perpetuell, vs gayneth no raunson.
We striuen, as did the houndes for the bone
That foughtē al day, & yet her part was non
Ther came a cur, while ỹ they wer so wroth
And bare away the bone from hem both
And therfore, at kinges court my brother
Eche man for him selfe, there is none other
Loue if thou list, for I loue and ay shall
And sothly leue brother this is all
Here in this prison mote we endure
And euerich of vs taken his auenture.
Great was the strife betwix hem twey
If that I had leyser for to sey
But to theffect, it happed on a day
To tell it you shortly as I may.
A worthy duke that hight Perithous.
That felowe was to duke Theseus
Syth thilke day that they were children lite
Was come to Athenes, his felowe to visite
And for to play, as he was wonte to do
For in this worlde he loued no man so
And he loued him as tenderly agayne
No well thei loued, as olde bokes sayne
That whan that one was deed, sothly to tell
His felow went & sought him down in hell
But of that story list me not to write.
Duke Perithous loued well Arcite
And had him know at Thebes yere by yere
And finally at request and prayere
Of Perithous, withouten any raunson
Duke Thebes let him out of prison
Frely to gon, whither him list ouer all
In suche a gyse, as I you tellen shall.
This was the forwarde, plainly to endite
Betwix duke Theseus and him Arcite
That if so were, that Arcite were yfounde
Euer in his life, by day, night or stounde
In any countre of this duke Theseus
And he were caught it was acorded thus
That with a swerde he shuld lese his heed
There was none other remedy ne reed
But taketh his leaue, & homward him sped
Let him beware, his neche lieth to wedde
Howe great sorowe suffreth nowe Arcite:
The dethe he feleth through his hert smite
He wepeth, waileth, and crieth pitously
To sleen him selfe he waiteth priuely
And said, alas the day that I was borne
Now is my prison worse than before
Now is me shapen eternally to dwell
Nought in purgatory, but in hell
Alas that euer I knewe Perithous
For els had I dwelt with Theseus
Ifetered in his prison euermo
Then had I be in blisse, and nat in wo
Onely the sight of her, whom that I serue
Though that I neuer her grace may deserue
Wolde haue suffised right ynough for me
O dere cosyn Palamon (q he)
Thine is the victorie of this auenture
Ful blisful in prison mayst thou endure
In prison, May certes but in paradise
Well hath fortune to the turned the dise
That hast the sight of her, and I thabsence
For possible is, sithens thou hast her presence
And arte a knight, a worthy man and able
That by sum case, syn fortune is chaūgeable
Thou maist somtime to thy desire attaine
But I that am exiled, and baraine
Of all grace, and in so great dispeyre
That ther nys water, erthe, fyre, ne eyre
Ne creature, that of hem maked is
That may me heale, or done comfort in this
Well oughte I sterue in wāhope and distresse
Farwell

Farwell my life, my lust, and my gladnesse
Alas, why playnen men so in commune
Of purueyaunce of god, or of fortune
That yeueth hem full ofte in many agise
Well bette than hem selfe can deuise.
Some man desireth to haue richesse
That cause is of her murdre or sickenesse
And some man wold out of his prison faine
That in his house, is of his meyne slaine
Infinite harmes bene in this matere
We wote not what thing we prayen here
We faren as he that dronke is as a mouse
A dröken man woten well, he hath an house
But he wot not, which the right way thider
And to a dronken man the way is slider
And certes in this worlde so faren we
We seken fast after felicite
But we go wrong full ofte truely
Thus we may saie all, and namely I
That wenden, and had a great opinion
That if I might scape fro prison
Than had I ben in ioye and parfite hele
There now I am exiled fro my wele
Sith that I may nat seen you Emely
I nam but deed, there nys no remedy.
Upon that other side Palamon
Whan that he wist Arcite was gon
Such sorowe he maketh, that the great tour
Resowned of his yelling and clamour
The pure fetters on his shinnes grete
Were of his bitter salte teares wete
Alas (quod he) Arcite cosyn mine
Of all our strife, god wot the frute is thine
Thou walkest now in Thebes at large
And of my wo, thou yeuest litell charge
Thou maist, sith ỹ hast wisedom and mähede
Assemble all the folke of our kinrede
And make warre so sharpe in this countre
That by some auenture, or by some treate
Thou maist haue her to lady and to wife
For whom I must nedes lese my life
For as by way of possibilite.
Sithe thou arte at thy large of prison free
And art a lorde, great is thine auauntage
More than is myn, that sterue here in a cage
For I may wepe & wayle, whiles that I lyue
With all the wo that prison may me yeue
And eke with paine, that loue yeueth me also
That doubleth all my tourment and my wo
Therwith the fire of ielousy up stert
Within his brest, and hent him by the hert
So woodly, that he likely was to beholde
The bore tree, or the assen deed and colde
Than said he. O cruell goddes, that gouerne
This worlde with your worde eterne
And writen in the table of Athamant
Your parliament and eterne graunt
What is mankinde more vnto you yholde
Than is the shepe, that rouketh in the folde?
For slaine is man, right as another beest
And dwelleth eke in prison, and in arrest
And hath sickenesse, and great aduersite
And oft time giltelesse parde.
What gouernance is in this prescience
That giltelesse tormenteth innocence?
And encreaseth thus all my penaunce
That man is bounden to his obseruaunce
For gods sake to leten of his will
There as a beest may all his lustes fulfyll
And whan a beest is deed, he hath no payn
But after his deth man mote wepe & playn:
Though in this world he haue care and wo
Without doute it may stonden so.
The answere of this lete I to diuines
But well I wote, in this world gret pine is
Alas I se a serpent or a thefe
That many a true man hath do mischefe
Go at his large, & where him list may turn
But I mote ben in prison through Saturn
And eke through Juno, ialous and eke wood
That hath stroied wel nye al the blood
Of Thebes, with his wast walles wide
And Venus sleeth me on that other side
For ielousie, and feare of him Arcite.
Nowe wil I stinte of Palamon alite
And let him in his prison still dwell
And of Arcite forth woll I you tell.
The sommer passeth, and the nightes long
Encreseth double wise the paines strong
Both of the louer, and of the prisoner
I not which hath the wofuller mister
For shortly to say, this Palamon
Perpetuell is dampned to prison
In chaines and feters to the deed
And Arcite is exiled on his heed
For euermore as out of that countre
Ne neuer more shall his lady se
You louers aske I nowe this question
Who hath the worse, Arcite or Palamon?
That one may se his lady day by day
But in prison mote he dwell alway
That other where him list may ride or go
But sene his lady shall he neuer mo
Nowe demeth as ye list, ye that can
For I woll tell forth my tale as I began.
Whan that Arcite to Thebes comen was
Full ofte a day he swelte and said alas
For sene his lady shall be neuer mo
And shortely to conclude, all his wo
So mikell sorowe made neuer creature

That is or shalbe, while the world may dure
His slepe, his meate, his drinke is him byraft
That leane he waxeth, and dry as a shaft
His eyen holow, and grisly to beholde
His hewe pale, and falowe as aschen colde
And solitary he was, and euer alone
And wailing all the night, making mone
And if he hearde songe or instrument
Then woulde he wepe, he might not stent
So feble were his spirites, and so lowe
And chaūged so, ỹ no man coude him knowe
His speche ne his voice, though men it herde
As in his gyre, for al the worlde it ferde
Nought comly like to louers malady
Of Hereos, but rather like many
Engendred of humours melancolike
Before in his cell fantastike
And shortely was turned all vp so doun
Bothe habite and disposicion
Of him, this wofull louer Arcite
what shulde I all day of his wo endite?
Whan he endured had a yere or two
This cruell torment, and this paine and wo
At Thebes in his countre, as I saide
Vpon a night in slepe as he him laide
Him thought how that the winged Mercury
Before him stode, and bad him be mery
His slepy yerde in hande he bare vpright
An hatte he wered vpon his heares bright
Arayed was this god, as he toke kepe
As he was, whan Argus toke his slepe
And said him thus: to Athenes shalt ỹ wende
There is the shapen of thy wo an ende
And with that word Arcite awoke & stert
Now truely how sore that me smert
Quod he, to Athenes right now wol I fare
Ne for no drede of death shal I spare
To se my lady, that I loue and serue
In her presence recke I not to sterue.
And with that word he caught a gret mirrour
And sawe that chaunged was all his colour
And sawe his visage all in a nother kinde
And right anon it ran him in his minde
That sith his face was so disfigured
Of malady, the whiche he had indured
He might well, if that he bare him lowe
Liue in Athenes euermore vnknowe
And seue his Lady welnigh day by day
And right anon he chaunged his aray
And clad him as a pore labourer
And all alone, saue onely a squier
That knewe his priuitie and al his caas
whiche was disguised porely as he was
To Athenes is he gon the next way
And to the court he went vpon a day
And at the gate he profered his seruice
To drugge & draw, what men would deuise
And shortly of this matter for to sayne
He fell in office with a chamberlayne
The whiche was dwelling with Emelye
For he was wise, and coone couth espye
Of euery seruaunt, which that serued here
Well couth he hewen wode, and water bere
For he was yong and mighty for the nones
And therto he was strong and bigge of bones
To done that any wight can him deuise
A yere or two he was in this seruice
Page of the chamber, of Emelye the bright
And Philostrate he saied that he hight
But half so welbeloued man as he
Ne was there none in court of his degre
He was so gentill of condicion
That through all the court was his renon
Thei said that it were a charitie
That Theseus wold enhauncen his degre
And put him in a worshipfull seruice
There as he might his vertue exercise
And thus within a while his name is spron
Both of his dedes, and of his good tong
That Theseus hath taken him so nere
That of his chamber he made him squiere
And yaue him gold to maintaine his degre
And eke men brought him out of his contre
From yere to yere full priuely his rent
But honestly and slyly he it spent
That no man wondered how he it had
And thre yere in this wise his life he ladde
And bare him so in peace and eke in werre
Ther was no man that Theseus hath der
And in this blisse let I nowe Arcite
And speake I woll of Palamon a lite
In darkenesse horrible and strong prison
This seuen yere hath sitten this Palamon
Forpined, what for wo and distresse
Who feleth double sore and heuinesse
But Palamon: that loue distraineth so
That wode out of his wit, he goeth for wo
And eke therto he is a prisonere
Perpetuel, and not onely for a yere.
Who coud rime in englishe properly
His martirdome? forsoth it am nat I
Therfore I passe as lightly as I may.
It befel that in the seuenth yere in may
The thirde night, as olde bokes sayne
(That all this storie tellen more playne)
Were it by aduenture or by destine
As when a thing is shapen, it shalbe
That soone after midnight, Palamon
By helping of a frende brake his prison
And fleeth the cite, as fast as he may go

For

For he had yeuen the gailer drinke so
Of a clarrie, made of certain wine
With Narcotise and Opie, of Thebes fine
That al ỹ night though mē would him shake
The gailer slept, he nugh not awake
And thus he fleeth as fast as he maie
The night was short, and fast by the daie
That nedes cost he mote hymself hide
And to a groue fast there beside
With dredfull foote than stalketh Palamon
For shortly this was his opinion
That in the groue he would him hide all daie
And in the night then wold he take his waie
To Thebes warde, his friendes for to prie
On Theseus to helpe hym to warrie
And shortly, either he would lese his life
Or winne Emelie vnto his wife
This is the effect, and his entent plain.
Now will I tourne to Arcite again
That little wist how nie was his care
Till ỹ fortune had brought him in her snare
The merie Larke, messanger of the daie
Saleweth in her song the morowe graie
And firie Phebus riseth vp so bright
That all the orisont laugheth of the sight
And with his stremes, drieth in the greues
The siluer droppes, hangyng in the leues.
And Arcite, that in the court reall
With Theseus his squier principall
Is risen, and looketh on the merie daie
And for to doen his obseruaunces to Maie
Remembryng on the point of his desire
He on his courser, startlyng as the fire
Is riden into the fieldes hym to plaie
Out of the court, were it a mile or tweie
And to the groue of whiche I you tolde
By aduenture, his waie he gan holde
To maken hym a garlonde of the greues
Were it of Wodbind or Hauthorn leues
And loud he song ayenst the Sonne shene
Maie, with all thy floures and thy grene
Welcome be thou faire freshe Maie
I hope that I some grene get maie
And from his courser, with a lustie hert
Into the groue full hastely he sterte
And in a pathe he romed vp and doun
There, as by aduenture this Palamon
Was in a bushe, that no man might hym se
For sore afraied of death was he
Nothyng ne knewe he that it was Arcite
God wote he would haue trowed full lite
Bothe soth is saied, go sithen many yeres
That field hath eyen, and wodde hath eres
It is full faire a man to beare hym euin
For all daie men mete at vnset steuin
Full little wote Arcite of this felawe
That was so nigh to herken of his sawe
For in the bushe sitteth he now full still
When that Arcite had romed all his fill
And songen all the roundell lustely
Into a studie he fell sodenly
As doen these louers in their queint gires
Now in the crop, and now doun in the breres
Now vp now doune, as bokget in a well
Right as the fridaie, sothly for to tell
Now it raineth now it shineth fast
Right so gan gerie Venus ouercast
The hartes of her folke, right as her daie
Is gerifull, right so chaungeth she araie
Selde is the Fridaie all the weke ilike
When that Arcite had song, he gan to sike
And set hym doune withouten any more
Alas (q he) the daie that I was bore
How long Juno thorough thy crueltee
Wilt thou waren Thebes the citee?
Alas ibrought is to confusion
The blood reall of Cadmus and Amphion
Of Cadmus, whiche was the first man
That Thebes builte, or first the toune began
And of the citee first was crouned kyng
Of his linage am I, and of his spryng
By verey line, as of the stocke riall
And now I am so caitife and so thrall
That he that is my mortall enemie
I serue hym as his squire poorely
And yet doeth me Juno well more shame
For I dare nat be knowe myne owne name
But there as I was wont to highte Arcite
Now highte I Philostrat nat worthy a mite
Alas thou fell Mars, alas thou Juno
Thus hath your ire our linage all fordo
Saue onely me, and wretched Palamon
That Theseus martreth in prison
And ouer all this, to slean me vtterly
Loue hath his firie dart so brennyngly
I sticked thorough my true carefull hart
That shapen was my death erst my shert
Ye slean me with your eyen Emelie
Ye been the cause wherefore I die
Of all the remenaunt of myne other care
Ne set I nat the mountaunce of a Tare
So that I coud do ought to your pleasaunce
And with ỹ worde he fell doune in a traunce
A long tyme, and afterward he vp sterte
This Palamō thought ỹ thorough his hert
He felt a colde swerde sodenly glide
For ire he quoke, no lenger would he abide
And when that he had heard Arcites tale
As he were wode, with face dedde and pale
He sterte hym vp, out of the bushes thicke

And saied: Arcite false traitour wicke
Now art thou hent, that louest my ladie so
For whom that I haue this pain and wo
And art my blood, and to my counsell sworn
As I haue full oft tolde thee here beforn
And hast be iaped here duke Theseus
And falsely hast chaunged thy name thus
I will be dedde, or els thou shalt die
Thou shalt not loue my ladie Emelie
But I woll loue her onely and no mo
For I am Palamon thy mortall fo
Though that I haue no weapē in this place
Bist out of prison am astert by grace
I dred nat, that either thou shalt die
Or thou ne shalt nat louen Emelie
Chese whiche thou wilt, or ỹ shalt not astert
This Arcite, with full despitous hert
When he hym knewe, and had his tale heard
As fers as a Lion, pulled out his sweard
And saied: By God that sitteth aboue
Ne wer that thou art sicke, and wod for loue
And eke ỹ thou no weapen hast in this place
Thou shouldest neuer out this groue pace
That thou ne shouldest dien of myne honde
For I defie the suertie and the bonde
Whiche ỹ thou saist that I haue made to thee
What very foole, thinke well that loue is free
And I will loue her maugre all thy might
But for aswoche as thou art a knight
And wilnest to daren here by battaile
Haue here mi truth, to morow I wil not faile
Without wittyng of any other wight
That here I will be founden as a knight
And bringen harneis, right inough for thee
And chese the best, and leaue the worst for me
And meate & drinke, this night will I bring
Inough for thee, and clothes for thy bedding
And if so be that thou my ladie win
And slea me in this wodde, there I am in
Thou maiest well haue thy ladie as for me.
This Palamon answerd, I graunt it thee
And thus thei been departed till a morowe
Whē ech of hem had laied his faith to borow
O Cupide out of all charitee
O reigne, ỹ wouldest haue no felow with the
Full soth is saied, that loue ne lordship
Woll nat his thankes haue any feliship
We finde that of Arcite and Palamon
Arcite is ridden anon into the toun
And on the morowe or it were daie light
Full priuely two harneis had he dight
Bothe sufficient and mete to darreigne
The battail in the field betwixt hem tweine
And on his horse, alone as he was borne
He carieth all his harneis hym beforne
And in the groue, at tyme and place iset
That Arcite and this Palamon been met
To chaungen gan the colour in her face
Right as the hunter in the reigne of Trace
That standeth at a gappe, with a speare
When hunted is the Lion or the Beare
And hereth hym rushyng in the leues
And breaketh the bowes in the greues
And thinketh, here cometh my mortal enemy
Without faile, he must be dedde or I
For either I mote slea hym at the gap
Or he mote slea me, if me mishap
So ferden thei, in chaungyng of her he we
As farre as eueriche of other knewe
There nas no good daie, ne no saluyng
But streight, without worde or rehersyng
Eueriche of hem helped for to arme other
As frendly, as he were his owne brother
And after that, with sharpe speares strong
Thei foinen eche at other wonder long
Thou mightest wenen, that this Palamon
In his fightyng, were a wodde Lion
And as a cruell Tygre was Arcite
As wilde Bores gan thei fight and smite
That frothen white as fome for ire woode
Up to the ancle foughten thei in her bloode
And in this wise, I let hem fightyng dwell
As fourth I woll of Theseus you tell
The destenie and the minister generall
That executeth in the worlde ouer all
The purueiaūce, that God hath said beforne
So strong it is, ỹ though ỹ world had sworne
The contrary of thyng be ye and naie
Yet sometyme it shall fall on a daie
That fell neuer yet in a thousande yere
For certainly our appetites here
Be it of warre, peace, hate, or loue
All is ruled by the sight aboue
This meane I now by mightie Theseus
That for to hunt is so delirous
And namely at the greate Hart in Maie
That in his bedde there daweth hym daie
That he nis clad, and redy for to ride
With hunt and horne, and houndes hym beside
For in his huntyng hath he soche delite
That it is all his ioie and appetite
To been hymself the greate Hartes bane
For after Mars, he serueth now Diane
Clere was the daie, as I haue tolde or this
And Theseus, with all ioie and blis
With his Ipolita, the faire quene
And Emelie, iclothen all in grene
On huntyng been thei ridden rially
And to the groue, that stoode there fast by
In which ther was an Hart, as mē him told

Duke Theseus the streight waie hath holde
And to the launde, he rideth hym full right
for thither was ỹ hart wōt to haue his flight
And ouer a broke, and so forth on his weie
This duke woll haue a cours at him or tweie
with houndes, soche as him list commaunde
And whē the duke was comen into the laūde
Under the soonne he looked, and that anon
He was ware of Arcite and Palamon
That foughten breme, as it were bulles two
The bright swordes wenten to and fro
So hodiously, that with the lest stroke
It semed that it would haue fellen an oke
But what thei weren, nothyng he ne wote
This duke w̄ his spores his courser smote
And at a start he was betwixt hem two
And pulled out his sworde, and cried, ho
No more, on paine of lesyng your hedde
By mightie Mars, he shall anone be dedde
That smiteth any stroke, that I maie seen
But telleth me, what mister men ye been
That been so hardie for to fighten here
Without iudge or other officere
As though it were in listes riall
This Palamon aunswered hastely
And saied: sir, what nedeth wordes mo
We haue the death deserued bothe two
Two wofull wretches been we and caitiues
That been encombred of our own liues
And as thou art a rightfull lorde and iudge
Ne yeue vs neither mercie ne refuge
But slea me first, for sainct charitee
But slea my felowe as well as me
Or slea him first, for though ỹ knowe it lite
This is thy mortall foe, this is Arcite
That fro thy lande is banished on his hedde
For whiche he hath deserued to be dedde
For this is he, that came vnto thy yate
And saied, that he hight Philostrate
Thus hath he iaped full many a yere
And thou hast made hym thy chief squiere
And this is he, that loueth Emelie.
For sith the daie is come that I shall die
I make plainly my confession
I am thilke wofull Palamon
That hath thy prison broke wickedly
I am thy mortall foe, and he am I
That loueth so hotte Emelie the bright
That I woll die here present in her sight
Wherefore I aske death and my iewise
But slea my felowe in thesame wise
For bothe we haue deserued to be slain.
This worthy duke aunswered anon again
And saied, this is a short conclusion
Your owne mouthe, by your confession
Hath damned you, and I woll it recorde
It nedeth not to pine you with a corde
Ye shall be dedde by mightie Mars the redde.
The quene anon for very woman hedde
Gan for to wepe, and so did Emelie
And all the ladies in the companie
Greate pitie was it, as thought hem all
That euer soche a chaunce should befall
For gentilmen thei were of greate estate
And nothyng but for loue was this debate
And sawe her bloody woundes wide and sore
And all criden bothe lesse and more
Haue mercie lorde vpon vs wemen all
And on her bare knees doune thei fall
And would haue kist his fete there he stode
Till at the last, aslaked was his mode
For pitie renneth soone in gentle hert
And though he first for ire quoke and stert
He hath considered shortly in a clause
The trespasses of hem both, and eke the cause
And although his ire her gilt accused
yet in his reason he hem bothe excused
As thus: he thought well that euery man
Woll helpe hymself in loue all that he can
And eke deliuer hymself out of prison
And eke his harte had compassion
Of wemen, for thei wepen euery in one
And in his gentle harte he thought anone
And softe vnto hymself he saied: fie
Vpon a lorde that woll haue no mercie
But be a Lion, bothe in worde and deede
To hem that been in repentaunce and dreede
As well as to a proude despitous man
That will maintain that he first began
That lorde hath little of discrecion
That in soche case can no difference
But waieth pride and humblenesse after one
And shortly, when his ire was thus a gone
He gan to looken vp with eyen light
And spake these wordes all one hight
The God of loue, ah benedicite
How mightie, and how greate a lorde is he
Against his might there gaineth no obstacles
He maie be cleaped a God for his miracles
For he can maken at his owne guise
Of euerich harte, as him list deuise
Lo here this Arcite, and this Palamon
That quietly were out of my prison gon
And might haue liued in Thebes rially
And knowen I am her mortall enemie
And that her death is in my power also
And yet hath loue, maugre her eyen two
Brought hem hither bothe for to die
Now loketh, is not this a greate folie?
Who maie be a foole, but if he loue?

Behold

Beholde for Goddes sake, that sitteth aboue
See how thei blede, be thei nat well araied
Thus hath her lorde, ỹ god of loue hem paied
Her wager, and her fees for her seruice
And yet thei wenen to be full wise
That serue loue, for ought that maie befall
But yet is this the best game of all
That she, for whom thei haue this toilite
Can hem therefore, as moche thanke as me
She wote no more of all this hote fare
By God, than wote a Cokowe or an Hare
But all mote been assaied hote and cold
A man mote been a foole other yong or old
I wotte it by my self full yore agone
For in my tyme, a seruaunt was I one
And therefore sith I knowe of loues pain
I wote how sore it can a man distrain
As he that oft hath be caught in her laas
I you forgeue all hooly this trespaas.
At the request of the quene, that kneleth here
And eke of Emely, my sister dere
And ye shall bothe anon vnto me swere
That ye shall neuer more my countre dere
Ne make warre vpon me night ne daie
But been my frendes in all that ye maie
I you forgeue this trespas euery dele
And thei hem sware his asking faire & wele
And hym of lordship and of mercie praied
And he hem graunted grace, and thus he said

To speake of worthie linage and richesse
Though that she were a quene or a princesse
Eche of you bothe is worthy doubtles
To wed when tyme is, but netheles
I speake, as for my sister Emely
For whom ye haue this strief and ielosy
Ye wote your self, she maie not wedde two
At ones, though ye fighten euer mo
But one of you, all be him lothe or lefe
He mote go pipe in an Iue lefe
This is to saie, she maie not haue bothe
Ne been ye neuer so ielous, ne so wrothe
And therefore, I you put in this degre
That eche of you shall haue his destine
As him is shape, and herken in what wise
Lo here your ende, of that I shall deuise.
My will is this, for plat conclusion
without any replicacion.
If that you liketh, taketh it for the best
That euerich of you shall go where hym lest
Frely, without raunsome or daunger
And this daie fiftie wekes, ferre ne nere
Euerich of you shall bryng an. C. knightes
Armed for the listes vpon all rightes
Iredy to darrein here by battaile
And this behote I you withouten faile
Upon my truthe, as I am true knight
That whether of you bothe hath that migh
That is to saie, that whether he or thou
Maie with his hundred, as I spake of now
Slea his contrary, or out of listes driue
Hym shall I yeue Emely to wiue
To whō that fortune yeueth so faire a grace
The lestes shall I make in this place
And God so wisely on my soule rewe
As I shall euen iudge be, and trewe
Ye shall non other ende with me make
That one of you shall be dedde or take
And ye thinken this is well isaied
Saith your aduise, and hold you well apaied
This is your ende, and your conclusion
Who loketh lightly now but Palamon?
Who springeth vp for ioie but Arcite?
Who coud tell, or who coud endite?
The ioie that is made in this place
When Theseus had doen so faire a grace
But doun on knees went euery maner wight
And thanked hym, with all her hert & might
And namely these Thebanes many a sithe
And thus with good hope and hert blithe
Thei take̅ her leue, & homward gan thei ride
To Thebes ward, with old walles wide
I trawe men would deme it negligence
If I forgetten to tell the dispence
Of Theseus, that goeth busely
To maken vp the listes rially
That soche a noble Theatre, as it was
I dare well saie, in this worlde there nas
The circute a mile was about
Walled with stone, and diched all about
Round was the shape, in maner of a compas
Full of degrees, the hight of sixtie paas
That when a man was set on one degree
He letted not his felowe for to see
Eastward there stoode a gate of marble wite
Westward right soche an other in thoppolite
And shortly to conclude, soche a place
Was none in yearth, as in so litell space
For in the londe, there nas no craftes man
That Geometrie, or Arithmetike can
Ne purtreiture, ne caruer of Images
That Theseus ne gaue him mete and wages
That Theatre to make and deuise
And for to doe his Rite and Sacrifice
He Eastward hath vpon the yate aboue
In worship of Venus, the Godes of loue
Doe make an auter, and an oratorie
And on the Westside, in memorie
Of Mars he maked soche an other
That cost of golde largely a fother

And

And Northward, in a turret in the wall
Of Alabaster white and redde Corrall
An oratorie riche for to see
In worship of Diane the Godes of chastite
Hath Theseus doe wrought in noble wise
But yet had I forgetten to deuise
The noble caruinges and the purtreitures
The shape, the countnaunce and the figures
That were in the oratories three
First in the temple of Uenus thou maist se
Wrought on the wall, full pitously to behold
The broken slepes, and the sighes cold
The sault teares and the weimentyng
The fire strokes, and the desiryng
That loues seruauntes in this life enduren
The othes, that her couenauntes assuren
Pleasaunce and hope, desire foolehardinesse
Beautie and youth, baudrie and richesse
Charmes and sorcerie leasinges and flattery
Dispence, busines, and ielousie
That weared of yelowe goldes a garlande
And a Cokowe sityng on her hande.
Feastes, instrumentes, carolles, and daunces
Justes and araie, and all the circumstaunces
Of loue, whiche I reken and reken shall
By order, were painted on the wall
And mo than I can make of mencion
For sothly all the mount of Citheron
Where Uenus hath her principall dwellyng
Was shewed on the wall in purtreyng
With all the ioie, and the lustinesse
Nought was forgetten the porte resse idlenesse
Ne Narcessus the faire of yore agone
Ne yet the folie of kyng Salomon
Ne yet the greate strength of Hercules
Thenchauntment of Medea and Circes
Ne of Turnus, with his hardie fers corage
The riche Cresus caitife in seruage
Thus maie you sen, that wisedom ne richesse
Beutie ne sleight, strength ne hardinesse
Ne maie with Uenus hold champartie
For as her list the worlde maie she gie
Lo, all these folke so cought were in her laas
Till thei for wo full oft saied alas
Suffiseth here one example or two
And though I coud reken a thousande mo
The statue of Uenus glorious to see
Was naked fletyng in the large see
And fro the nauell doune all couered was
With waues grene, and bright as any glas
A citriole in her right hande had she
And on her hedde, full semely for to se
A rose garlande fresche, and well smellyng
Aboue her hedde Doues flitteryng
Before her stoode her soonne Cupido
Upon his shoulders winges had he two
And blinde he was, as it is oft seen
A bowe he had and arrowes bright and kene
Why should I not as well tellen all
The purgatorie that was ther about ouer al
Within the temple of mightie Mars the rede
All painted was ỹ wall in length & in brede
Like to the Estris of the grisly place
That hight ỹ greate tẽple of Mars in Trace
In thilke colde frostie region
There Mars hath his soueraine mancion
First on the wall was painted a forest
In whiche there wõneth nother man ne best
With knottie and knarie trees old
Of stubbes sharpe and hidous to behold
In whiche there was a romble and a shwow
As though a storme should breake euery bow
And doun ward vnder an hill vnder a bent
There stode the temple of Mars armipotent
Wrought all of burned stele, of whiche thẽtre
Was long and streight, and gastly for to see
And therout cam soche a rage and soch a vise
That it made all the gates for to rise
The Northernlight in at the dores shone
For windowe on the wall was there none
Through which mẽ might any light discerne
The dores were all of athamant eterne
Yclenched ouerthwart and endlong
With Iron tough, for to maken it strong
Euery piller, the temple to sustaine
Was tonne greate, of yren bright and shene
There saw I first the darke ymaginyng
Of felonie, and eke the compassyng:
The cruell ire, redde as any glede
The pickpurse, and eke the pale drede
The smiler, with the knife vnder the cloke
The shepen brennyng with the blacke smoke
The treason of the murdryng in the bedde
The open warre, with woundes all be bledde
Conteke with blody knives, & sharpe manace
All full of chirkyng was that sory place
The slear of him self yet saw I there
His hart blode hath bathed all his here
The naile ydriuen in the shode on right
With colde death, wh mouthe gapyng vpright
Amiddes of the temple sate Mischaunce
With Discomfort, and sory Countenaunce
Yet saw I Wodnesse laghyng in his rage
Armed complaint on theft and firs courage
The carraine in the bushe, with throt ycorue
A thousande slain, and nat of qualme istorue
The tiraunt, with the praie by force yraft
The toune destroied, there was nothing laft
Yet saw I brent the shippes hoppesteres
The hunter istrangled with the wilde beres

The

The Sowe frettyng the child in cradell
The Coke is scalded, for all his long ladell
Nought was foryeten the infortune of Mart
The Carter ouer ridden by his owne carte
Under the whele, full lowe he laie a doune
There were also of Martes deuision
The Barbour, the Botcher, and the Smith
That forgeth sharpe swordes on the stith
And all aboue depainted in a toure
Sawe I Conquest, sittyng in greate honour
With the sharpe sworde ouer his hedde
Hangyng by a subtill twined threde
Depainted was there, the slaughter of Iulius
Of greate Nero and of Antonius
All be that thilke tyme thei were vnborne
yet was her death depainted there beforne
By manacyng of Mars, right by figure
So was it shewed in that portreiture
As is depainted in the cortres aboue
Who shall be dead or els slain for loue
Sufficeth one ensample in stories old
I may not reken them all, though I would
The statue of Mars vpon a carte stode
Armed, and loked grim as he were wode
And ouer his head there shinen twoo figures
Of sterres, that been cleped in scriptures
That one (Puella) hight, that other (Rube⁹)
This God of armes was arayed thus
A wolfe there stode beforne him at his fete
With yen redde, and of a man he ete
With subtell pensill was painted this storie
In redoutyng of Marce and of his glorie
Now to the temple of Diane the chaste
As shortly as I can I woll me haste
To tell you all the discripcion
Depainted been the walles vp and doune
Of huntyng and of shamfast chastite
There sawe I how wofull Calistope
When that Diane greued was with her
Was tourned fro a woman to a bere
And afterward was she made the lode sterre
Thus was it painted, I can saie no ferre
Her sonne is ehe a sterre as men maie see
There sawe I Dane tourned vnto a tree
I meane not the godesse Diane
But Venus doughter, whiche ỹ hight Dane
There sawe I Atheon an hert ymaked
For vẽgeaunce that he sawe Diane all naked
I sawe how ỹ his houndes haue him cought
And freten him, for thei knewe him nought
yet ypainted was a litell ferthermore
How Athalant hunted the wilde Bore
And Meliager, and many other mo
For which Diane wrought him care and wo
There sawe I many a nother wonder storie
Whiche me list not to drawe in memorie
This goddesse full well vpon an hert shete
With small houndes all about her fete
And vnderneth her fete, she had a Moone
Weryng it was, and should wane soone
In gaudie grene, her statue clothed was
With bowe in hande, and arrowes in caas
Her iyen she cast full lowe a doune
There Pluto hath his darke region
A woman trauelyng was her before
But for her childe, so long was vnborn
Full pitously Lucina gan she call
And saied helpe, for thou maiest best of all
Well coud he paint liuely that it wrought
With many a floryein he the hewes bought.

Now been these lystes made, and Theseus
That at his great cost hath arayed thus
The temples, and the theatre euerydel
Whan it was done, it liked him wonder wel
But stinte I wol of Theseus alite
And speake of Palamon and of Arcite
The day approcheth of her returning
That euerich shuld an. C. knightes bring
The battayle to darreyne, as I you tolde
And to Athenes, her couenaũtes to holde
Hath euerich of hem brought an. c. knightes
Well armed for the warre, at all rightes
And sikerly, there trowed many a man
That neuer sithens the world began
As for to speke of knighthode, of her honde
As farre as god hath made see or londe
Nas of so fewe, so noble a company
For euery weight, that loued chiualry
And wold his thankes haue a passing name
Hath praied, that he mighte be of that game
And wel was him, that therto chosen was
For if there fell to morowe suche a caas
Ye knowe well, that euery lusty knight
That loueth paramours, & hath his might
Were it in Englande, or els where
They wolde faine willen to be there
To fight for a lady, ah, benedicite
It were a lusty sight for to se.
And right so farden they with Palamon
With him there went knightes many on
Some wold ben armed in an habergeon
And in a brest plate, with a sight gippon
And some wold haue a paire of plates large
And some wold haue a pruce sheld or a targe
Some wold be armed on his legges wele
And haue an axe, and some a mace of stele
There nas non newe guyse, that it nas olde
Armed were they, as I haue you tolde
Euerich after his opinion.

¶ Ther

¶ Ther maist thou se coming w̄ Palamon
Ligurge him selfe, the great king of Trace
Blacke was his berd, & manly was his face
The sercles of his eyen in his heed
They glouden betwixt yelowe and reed
And like a Lion loked he aboute
With kemped heares on his browes stoute
His limmes great, his brawnes strong
His shoulders brode, his armes round & long
And as the gise was in his countre
Full hie vpon a chare of golde stode he
With foure white bulles in the trays
In stede of a cote armure, ouer his harnays
With nailes yelowe, and bright as any golde
He hath a beares skyn, cole blacke for olde
His long heare was kempt behind his backe
As any rauens fether it shone for blacke
A wrethe of gold arme gret, of huge weight
Vpon his heed set full of stones bright
Of fine rubies and diamandes
About his chare ther went white allaundes
Twenty and mo, as great as any stere
To hunten at the lion, or at the wilde bere
And folowed him, with mosell fast ybounde
Colers of gold, and torrettes yfiled rounde
An hundred lordes had he in his route
Armed ful well, with hertes sterne & stoute.

With Arcite, in stories as men fynde
The great Emetrius the king of Inde
Vpon a stede bay, trapped in stele
Couered with a cloth of gold diapred wele
Came riding like the god of Armes Marce
His cote armure was of clothe of Trace
Couched with perle, white, rounde and gret
His sadle was of brent gold newe ybet
A mantel vpon his shoulders honging
Brette full of rubies, reed as fyre sparkling
His crispe heare like ringes was yronne
And ẏ was yelow, and gletering as the sonne
His nose was hie, his eyen bright cytryn
His lippes ruddy, his colour was sanguyn
A fewe frekles in his face yspente
Betwixt yelow, and somdele blacke ymeynte
And as a Lion he his eyen keste
Of fiue and twenty yere his age I geste
His berde was well begonne for to spring
His voice was as a trompet sowning
Vpon his heed be weared of laurer grene
A garlande fresshe and lusty for to sene
Vpon his hande he bare for his delite
An Egle tame, as any lylly white
An hundred lordes had he with him there
All armed saue her heades in her gere
Full richely in all maner thinges
For trusteth well, that erles, dukes, & kinges
Were gathered in this noble company
For loue, and for encrease of chiualry
About this king ther ran on euery parte
Ful many a tame Lion and libarte
And in this wise, these lordes al and some
Ben on the sonday to the cite come
Aboute prime, and in the toune a light.
This Theseꝰ, this duke this worthy knight
Whan he had brought hem into his cite
And inned hem, euerych after his degre
He feesteth hem, and doth so great laboure
To easen hem, and don hem all honoure
That yet men wenen that no mans wit
Of none estate coude amende it
The minstralcie, the seruice at the feest
The great yeftes, to the most and leest
The rich array, throughout Theseus paleis
Ne who sate first ne last vpon the deys
What ladies fayrest ben or best dauncing
Or whiche of hem can best daunce or sing
Ne who moste felyngly speketh of loue
Ne what haukes sitten on perchen aboue
Ne what houndes liggen on the flour adoun
Of all this now make I no mencion
But all the effecte, that thinketh me the beste
Now cometh ẏ point, harkeneth if you leste.

The sonday at night, or day begā to spring
Whan Palamon the larke herde sing
Although it were nat day by houres two
Yet song the larke, and Palamon right tho
With holy hert, and with an hie corage
He rose vp, to wenden on his pilgrimage
Vnto the blisfull Cithere a benigne
I meane Venus, honourable and digne
And in her hour, he walketh forth a paas
Vnto the listes, there the temple was
And doune he kneleth, & with humble chere
And herte sore he said, as ye shall here.
¶ Fayrest of fayre: O lady mine Venus
Doughter of Joue, and spouse to Vulcanus
Thou glader of the mounte of Citheron
For thilke loue thou haddest to Adon
Haue pite of my bitter teares smerte
And take my humble praier at thyn herte.
Alas, I ne haue no langage to tell
The effect, ne the turment of mine hell
Myn herte may not myn harmes bewraie
I am so confused, that I can not saie
But mercy lady bright, that woste wele
My thought, & seest what harmes that I fele
Consider al this, and rue vpon my sore
As wisly as I shall for euermore
Emforth my might, thy true seruaunt be

And holde warre alway with chastite
That make I myn auowe, so ye me helpe
I kepe not of armes for to yelpe
Ne I ne aske to morowe to haue victory
Ne renome in this case, ne vaine glory
Of prise of armes, to blowen vp and doun
But wolde haue fully possessioun
Of Emelye, and dye in her seruice
Finde thou the maner howe, & in what wise
I recche not, but it may better be
To haue victory of hem, or they of me
So that I haue my lady in myn armes
For though so be that Mars is god of Armes
Your vertue is so great in heauen aboue
That if you list, I shall wel haue my loue
Thy temple shall I worship euer mo
And on thine aulter, where I ride or go
I woll don sacrifice, and fires bete
And if ye wol not so, my lady swete
Than pray I you, to morowe with a spere
That Arcite me throughe the hert bere
Than recke I not, whan I haue lost my life
Though Arcite winne her to wife
This is the effecte and ende of my prayere
Yeue me my lady, thou blisfull lady dere.
Whan the orison was done of Palamon
His sacrifice he did, and that anon
Ful pitously, with all circumstaunces
All tell I nat as now his obseruaunces.
But at the last, the statu of Venus shoke
And made a signe, wherby that he toke
That his prayer accepted was that day
For though the signe shewed a delay
Yet wist he well, that graunted was his bone
And with glad hert he went him hom ful sone.

The third houre in equall that Palamon
Began to Venus temple for to goon
Vp rose the sonne, and vp rose Emelie
And vnto the temple of Diane gan hie
Her maidens, the whiche thider were lad
Ful redily with hem the fyre they had
The encense, the clothes, & the remenaũt all
That to the sacrifice longen shall
The hornes full of meethe as was the gise
There lacked nought to don her sacrifice
Smoking the temple, full of clothes fayre
This Emely, with herte debonayre
Her body wisshe, with water of a well
But how she did right I dare not tell
But it be any thing in generall
And yet it were a game to here it all
To him that meaneth wel, it were no charge
But it is good a man be at his large
Her bright heare was vnkẽpt & vntressed all
A crowne of a grene oke vnseriall
Vpon her heed set ful fayre and mete
Two fyres on the aulter gan she bete
And did her thinges, as men may beholde
In Stace of Thebes, and these bokes olde
Whã kendled was the fire, with pitous chere
Vnto Diane she spake as ye may here.
O chaste goddesse of the woddes grene
To whom both heuẽ and yearth & see is sene
Quene of the reigne of Pluto, derke and low
Goddesse of maidẽs, ỹ myn hert hathe know
Ful many a yere, and woste what I desire
As kepe me fro the vengeaunce of thyn yre
That Acteon abought cruelly
Chaste goddesse, well woste thou that I
Desyre to ben a mayde al my life
Ne neuer woll I be loue ne wife
I am thou (woste well) of thy company
A maide, and loue hunting and venery
And for to walken in the woddes wilde
And not for to ben a wife, & ben with childe
Nought will I knowe company of man
Now helpe me lady sithe you may and can
For tho thre formes that thou hast in the
And Palamon, that hath such a loue to me
And eke Arcite, that loueth me so sore
This grace I pray the, withouten more
And send loue and peace betwixt hem two
And fro me turne awaye her hertes so
That al her hotte loue, and her desire
And al her busy turment, and all her fire
Be queynt, or turned in an other place
And if so be thou wolte not do me that grace
Or if so be my destenye be shapen so
That I shal nedes haue one of hem two
As sende me him that most desireth me
Beholde goddesse of clene chastite
The bitter teares, that on my chekes fall
Syn thou art a maide, and keper of vs all
My maidenhede thou kepe, and wel conserue
And while I liue, a maiden woll I the serue.
The fyres brenne vpon the auter clere
While Emely was thus in her prayere
But sodenly she sawe a thing queynte
For right anon, one of the fyres queynte
And quicked again, and after that anon
That other fyre was queynte, and al agon
And as it queinte it made a whistling
As done these wete brondes in her brenning
And at the brondes ende, out ran anone
As it were bloddy droppes many one
For whiche so sore agaste was Emelye
That she was well nye madde, & gan to crye
For she ne wiste what it signified
But onely for the feare thus she cried

And

And wepte, that it was pyte for to here
And therwithal Diane gan to apere
With bowe in honde, right as an huntéresse
And said doughter, stinte thine heuinesse
Amonge the goddes hie it is affirmed
And by eterne worde, written and confirmed
Thou shalt ben wedded to one of tho
That haue for the so moche care and wo
But vnto whiche of hem I may not tell
Farewell, for I maie no lenger dwell
The fyres, whiche on myn auter brenne
Shall declaren, er that thou gon henne
This auenture of loue, as in this case
And with that word, the arowes in ỹ case
Of the goddesse, clateren faste and ring
And forth she went, and made vanishing
For whiche this Emelye astonied was
And said: what mounteth this, alas
I put me vnder thy protection
Diane, and vnder thy disposicion
And home she goth the next way
This is the effecte there is no more to say.

The next houre of Mars folowing this
Arcite vnto the temple walked is
Of fiers Mars, to done his sacrifise
With all the might of his paynem wise
With pitous herte and hye deuocion
Right thus to Mars he said his orison.
O stronge god, that in the reignes colde
Of Trace honoured arte, and lorde yholde
And haste in euery reigne and euery londe
Of armes, al the bridle in thyn honde
And hem fortunest, as the liste deuise
Accepte of me my pitous sacrifice
If so be my thought may deserue
And that my might be worthy for to serue
Thy godhede, that I may ben one of thine
Than pray I the, that thou rue on my pine
For thilke paine, and thilke hotte fire
In which thou brentest whilom for desire
Whan thou vsedest the faire beaute
Of fayre yonge freshe Venus fre
And haddest her in thin armes, at thy will
Although thou ones on a time misfill
Whan Vulcanus had caught the in his laas
And founde the ligging by his wife alas
For thilke sorow, that was in thine herte
Haue ruthe as well on my paines smerte
I am yong and vnconning, as thou wost
And as I trowe, with loue offended most
That euer was any liues creature
For she that doth me all this wo endure
Ne retcheth neuer, where I sinke or flete
And well I wote, or she me mercy hete
I mote with strēgth winne her in this place
And wel I wote, without helpe or grace
Of the, ne may my strenght not auayle
Thā helpe me lord to morow in my battaile
For thilke fire, that whylom brent the
As well as the fyre now brenneth me
And do, that I to morowe haue the victory
Myn be the trauaile, and thine be the glory
Thy soueraine temple wol I most honouren
Of any place, and alway most labouren
In thy plesaunce and in thy craftes strong
And in thy temple, I woll my baner hong
And all the armes of my companie
And euermore, vntill the day I dye
Eterne fyre I wol before the finde
And ehe to this auowe I wol me binde
My berde, my heare, ỹ hongeth lowe adoun
That neuer yet felte offencioun
Of rasour ne of shere, I wol the yeue
And ben thy true seruaunt while I liue
Now lord haue ruthe vpon my sorowes sore
Yeue me the victory, I aske the no more.
The praier stinte of Arcite the strong
The ringes on the temple dore thei rong
And eke the dores clatren full faste
Of whiche Arcite somwhat him agaste.
The fyres brennen vpon the auter bright
That it gan all the temple light
A swete smel anon the grounde vp yaste
And Arcite anon his honde vp haste
And more ensence into the fyre he caste
With other rites mo, and at the laste
The statu of Mars began his hauberke ring
And with that sounde he herd a murmuring
Ful lowe and dym, that said thus: victory
For which he yaf to Mars honour and glory
And thus with ioye, and hope well to fare
Arcite anon into his inne is fare
As fayne as foule is of the bright sonne
And right anon suche a strife is begonne
For thilke graunting, in the heuen aboue
Betwirt Venus, the goddesse of loue
And Mars the sterne god armipotent
That Jupiter was busy it to stente
Til that the pale Saturnus the colde
That knewe so many auentures olde
Founde in his experience and arte
That he ful sone hath pleased euery parte
And sothe is said, elde hath gret auauntage
In elde is both wisedome and vsage
Men may the olde out ren, but not oute rede
Saturne anon, to stinten strife and drede
Al be it that it be againe his kinde
Of al this strife he can remedy finde
My derr doughter Venus, q Saturne

My course that hath so wide for to turne
Hath more power than wote any man
Myn is the drenching in the see so wan
Myn is the prison in the derke cote
Myn is ỹ stragling & the honging by ỹ throte
The murmure, and the churles rebelling
The groning, and the pryuy empoysoning
I do vengeaunce and plaine correccion
While I dwell in the signe of the Lion
Myn is the ruyne of the hie halles
The fallyng of the toures and of the walles
Upon the mynor, or vpon the carpenters
I slewe Sampson, shaking the pillers
And myn ben the maladies colde
The derke treasons, and the castels olde
My losing is the father of pestilence
Now wepe no more, I shal do my diligence
That Palamon, that is thin owne knight
Shall haue his lady, as thou him behight
Though mars shal help his knight natheles
Betwirt you it mote somtime be pees
Al be ye not of one complexcion
That causeth al day such denision
I am thyn ayle, redy at thy will
Wepe no more, I wol thy lust fulfill.

Now wol I stinten of these goddes aboue
Of Mars, and of Venus goddesse of loue
And plainly I wol tellen you as I can
The great effect, of which that I began.

Great was the feast in Athenes that day
And eke that lusty season in May
Made euery wight to ben in such pleasaunce
That al that day iusten they and daunce
And spenten it in Venus hye seruise
But because that they shulden arise
Erly, for to se the great sight
Unto her rest went they at night
And on the morow whan day gan spring
Of horse and harneys, noise and clatering
There was in the hostelries al aboute
And to the palays rode there many a route
Of lordes, vpon stedes and palfreys.

There mayest thou see deuising of harneis
So vncouthe, so riche, and wrought so wele
Of goldsmythry, of braudry, and of stele
The shildes bright, testers, and trappers
Gold hewē helmes, hauberkes & cot armers
Lordes in paramentes, on her coursers
Knightes of retenue, and eke squiers
Nayling the speres, and helmes bokeling
Gigging of sheldes with lainers lacing
There as nede is, they were nothing ydell
The soming stedes on the golden bridell
Gnawing, and faste the armurers also
With file, and hammer, riding to and fro
Yemen on foote, and comunes many one
With short staues, thicke as they may gone
Pipes, trompes, nakoners, and clarions
That in the batayle blowen blody sowns
The palais full of people vp and doun
Here thre, there ten, holding her question
Deuining of these Theban knightes two
Some said thus, some said it shuld be so
Some helde with him with the blacke berde
Some wt the balled, some wt the thick herde
Some said he loked grim, and wolde fight
He hath a sparth of twenty pound of weight.

Thus was the hall full of deuining
Longe after the sonne gan to spring
The great Theseus of his slepe gan wake
With minstralcie and noyse that they make
Helde yet the chambre of his palays riche
Til that the Theban knightes, both yliche
Honoured weren, and into the place ifette.

Duke Theseus is at the window sette
Arayed right as he were a god in trone
The people preased thyderwarde full sone
Him for to sene, and done him hye reuerence
And eke for to here his hest and his sentence
An heraude on a scaffolde made on oo
Tyl all the noise of the people was ydo
And whan he saw the people of noise still
Thus shewed he the mighty dukes will.

The lorde hath of his hye discrecion
Considred, that it were destruccion
To gentle blood, to fighten in this gise
Of mortall battaile, now in this empryse
Wherefore to shapen that they shall not dye
He wol his first purpose modifie
No man therfore, vp paine of losse of life
No maner shotte, polax, ne short knife
Into the lystes sende, or thyder bring
Ne short swerde to sticke with point byting
No man ne drawe, ne beare it by his side
Ne no man shall to his felowe ride
But one course, with a sharpe grouden spere
Foine if him list on fote, him selfe to were
And he that is at mischefe, shal be take
And not slaine, but brought to the stake
That shal ben ordained on either side
But thider he shal by force, and there abyde
And if so fal, that the chieftaine be take
On either side, or els sleen his make
No lenger shall the turnament laste
God spede you, gothe and layeth on faste
With swordes & long males fighten your fill
Goth now your way, this is the lordes will.

The voice of the people touched heuen
So loude cried they with mery steuen

God

God saue suche a lorde, that is so good
He willeth no distruccion of blood
Up gothe the trompes and the melody
And to the listes, rideth so the company
By ordinaunce, throughout the cite large
Honged with cloth of gold, & not with sarge
Ful like a lord this noble duke gan ride
These two Thebans on euery side
And after rode the quene and Emelye
And after that an other companye
Of one and other, after her degre
And thus they passen throughout the cite
And to the listes comen they be by time
It nas not of the day yet fully prime
Whan set was Theseus ful riche and hye
Ipolita the quene, and Emelye
And other ladies in degrees aboute
Unto the setes preaseth all the route
And westward, thrugh ỹ gates vnder marte
Arcite, and eke an hundred of his parte
With baner reed, is entred right anon
And in the selue momet entred Palamon
Is, vnder Uenus, est warde in that place
With baner white, and hardy chere and face
And in al the world, to seken vp and doun
So euen without variacion
There nas suche companies twey
For there nas none so wise that coude sey
That any had of other auauntage
Of worthines, ne of estate, ne age
So euen were they chose to gesse
And into the renges fayre they hem dresse
Whan that her names red were euerichone
That in her nombre, gile were there none
Tho were the gates shit, and cried was loude
Do nowe your deuer yong knightes proude
The heraudes left her priking vp & doun
Now ryngen trompes loude and clarioun
There is no more to say, esse and west
In goth the sharpe speres sadly in the arrest
In gothe the sharpe spurres into the side
There se men who can iust, and who can ride
There shiueren shaftes, vpon sheldes thicke
He feleth through the hert spoune the pricke
Up springeth the speres, twēty fote on hight
Out goth the swordes, as the siluer bright
The helmes they to hewe, and to shrede
Out burst the blood, with sterne stremes rede
With mighty maces, the bones they to breke
He through ỹ thickest of the thrōg gan threke
Ther stōblen stedes strong, and doun gon all
He rolled vnder the foote as dothe a ball
He foyneth on his fete with a tronchoun
And he hurleth with his horse adoun
He through the body is hurte, and sith ytake
Maugre his heed, & brought vnto the stake
As forward was, right there he must abide
An other is ladde on that other side
And somtime doeth hem Theseus to reste
Hem to refreshe, and drinke if hem leste.
Full ofte a day haue these Thebans two
To gither met, and don eche other wo
Unhorsed hath eche other of hem twey
Ther was no tigre, in the vale of Galaphey
Whan her whelpe is stole, whan it is lite
So cruell on the hunte, as is Arcite
For ielous herte, vpon this Palamon
Ne in Belmarye, there is no fel Lion
That hunted is, or for his hungre woode
Ne of his prey, desireth so the bloode
As Palamon to slee his foe Arcite
The ielous strokes on her helmes bite
Out rēneth ỹ bloode on both her sides rede
Somtime an ende there is of euery dede
For er the sonne vnto the rest wente
The strong king Emetrius gan hente
This Palamon, as he faught w̄ this Arcite
And made his swerde depe in his flesshe bite
And by force of twenty is he take
Unyolden, and drawen to the stake
And in the rescous of this Palamon
The strong king Ligurge is borne adoun
And king Emetrius, for all his strength
Is borne out of his sadle a swordes length
So hurt him Palamon or he were take
But al for naught, he was brought to ỹ stake
His hardy herte might him helpe naught
He must abide, whan that he was caught
By force, and eke by composicion
Who soroweth now but woful Palamon:
That mote no more gon againe to fight.
And whan ỹ Theseus had sene that sight
He cried hoe: no more, for it is don
He none shall lenger to his felowe gon
I woll be true iuge, and not party
Arcite of Thebes shall haue Emely
That by his fortune hath her fayre ywonne
Anon there is a noyse of people bygonne
For ioye of this, so loude and hie withall
It semed that the listes should fall.
What can now faire Uenus done aboue:
What saith she now: what doth the quene of loue
But wepeth so, for wanting of her will
Till that her teares on the listes fell
She sayd: I am ashamed doutles
Saturne saide: doughter holde thy pees
mars hath al his wil his knizt hath his bone
And by mine heed, thou shalte be eased sone.
The trompes with the loude minstralcye
The heraudes, that so loude yel and crye

Ben in her wele, for loue of dan Arcite
But herkeneth me, and stinteth noise a lite
Whiche a miracle there bifell anon.
The fiers Arcite hath his helme of ydon
And on a courser, for to shewe his face
He pricketh endlong the large place
Loking vpwarde vpon Emelie
And she ayen him cast a frendly eye
(For women as to spehe in commune
They folowen al the fauour of fortune)
And was al his chere, as in his herte
Out of the ground a fyre infernall sterte
From Pluto sent, at the request of Saturne
For which his horse for feare gan to turne
And lepe a side, and foundred as he lepe
And er that Arcite may taken kepe
He pight him of on the pomel of his heed
That in the place he lay, as he were deed
His brest to brosten with his sadel bowe
As blacke he lay as any cole or crowe
So was the blood yronne in his face.
Anon he was brought out of the place
With hert sore, to Theseus paleis
Tho was he corven out of his harneis
And in a bedde ybrought ful fayre and blive
For he was yet in memory, and on liue
And alway crieng after Emely.
Duke Theseus, withall his company
Is comen home to Athenes his cite
With all blisse and great solempnite
Al be it that this auenture was fall
He would not discomforte hem all
Men said eke, that Arcite should not die
He should ben yhealed of his maladie
And of an other thing they were as faine
That al hem all there was none slaine
All were they sore hurte, and namely one
That with a spere was thronled his brest bone
Two other woundes, and two broken armes
Some had salues, and some had charmes
Fermaces of herbes, and eke saue
They dronken, for they would her liues haue
For which this noble duke, as he well can
Comforteth and honoureth euery man
And made reuel al the longe night
Unto the straunge lordes, as it was right
Ne there nas holde no discomforting
But as iustes or at turneying
For sothly ther nas no discomfiture
For falling is holde but an auenture
Ne to be lood by force vnto a stake
Unyolden, and with twenty knightes take
One person a lone, withouten any mo
And haried forth, by arme, fote, and too
And eke his stede driuen forth with staues
With footemen, bothe yemen and knaues
It was aretted him no vilanie
There may no man cleape it cowardie
For whiche anon, duke Theseus did cry
To stinten all rancour and enuy
The grete as well of one side as of other
And either side ylike, as others brother
And yaue hem rightes after her degre
And fully held a fest daies thre
And conueyed the knightes worthely
Out of his toune, a daies iorney largely
And home went euery man the right waie
Ther nas no more but fare well and haue good daie
Of this battaile, I wol no more endite
But speake of Palamon and Arcite
Swelleth the brest of Arcite, and the sore
Encreaseth at his hert more and more
The clotered blode, for any liche craste
Corrumped, and is in his body laste
That neither veineblode, ne ventousing
Ne drinke of herbes, may be helping
By vertue expulsed, or anymall
For thilke vertue cleaped naturall
Ne may the venim voide, ne expell
The pipes of his longes began to swell
And euery lacerte, in his brest adoun
Is shent with venim and corrupcion
Him gaineth neither, for to get his life
Vomite vpwarde, ne doun warde laxatife
All is to brust thilke region
Nature hath no dominacion
And certainly ther as nature wol nat wirch
Farwel phisike, go beare the corse to chirch
This is all and some, that Arcite must die
For whiche he sendeth after Emelie
And Palamon his cosyn dere
Than said he thus, as ye shall after here
Nought may my wofull spirite in my here
Declare a point of all my sorowes smert
To you my lady, that I loue most
But I bequeth the seruice of my gost
To you abouen any creature
Sin that my life may no lenger dure
Alas the wo, alas my paines strong
That I for you haue suffered, and so long
Alas the dethe, alas myn Emely
Alas departing of our company
Alas myn hertes quene, alas my liues wife
Myn hertes lady, ender of my life
What is the world, what asken men to haue?
Now with his loue, now in his cold graue
Alone withouten any company
Farwel my swete foe, myn Emely
And softe take me in your armes twey
For the loue of God, herkeneth what I sey.

I

I haue here with my cosin Palamon
Had strief and rancour, many a daie agon
For loue of you, and for my iealousie
And Jupiter so wisely my soule gie
To speaken of a seruaunt properlie
With circumstaunces, all trulie
That is to say, trouth, honour, & knighthede
Wisedome, humblesse, estate, and hie kinrede
Fredome, and all that longeth to that art
So Jupiter haue of my soule part
As in this worlde, right now knowe I non
So worthy to be loued as Palamon
That serueth you, and woll doen all his life
And if that you shall euer been a wife
Forget not Palamon, the gentle man
And with that worde his speche faille began
For from his feete vnto his brest was come
The colde death, that had hym nome
And yet more ouer, for in his armes two
The vitall strength is lost, and all a go
Saue onely the intellect, without more
That dwelleth in his harte sicke and sore
Gan failen, when the harte felt death
Dusked his yen two, and failed breath
But on his Ladie, yet cast he his eye
His last worde was mercie Emelie
His spirite chaunged, and out went there
Whether warde I can not tell, ne where
Therefore I stint, I am no diuinistre
Of soules finde I not in this registre
Ne me lesse not thilke opinion to tell
Of hem, though thei writē where thei dwell
Arcite is cold, that Mars his soule gie
Now woll I speke forth of Emelie
Shright Emelie, and houlen Palamon
And Theseus his sister vp toke anon
Swouning, and bare her fro his corse away
What helpeth it to tary forth the daie
To tellen how she wept both euen & morow
For in soche case women haue moche sorowe
When that her husbandes been fro hem go
That for the more partie thei sorowen so
Or els fallen in soche maladie
That at the last, certainly thei die
Infinite been the sorowe and the teres
Of old folke, and folke of tender yeres
In all the toune for death of this Theban
For hym there wepeth both child and man
So greate wepyng was there not certain
When Hector was brought, all fresshe islain
To Troie alas, the pite that was there
Cratchyng of chekes, rentyng eke here
Why woldest thou be dedde, thus womē crie?
And haddest gold inough, and Emelie.
No man mase glad Theseus
Sauyng his old father Egeus
That knewe this worldes transmutacion
As he had seen it, bothe vp and doun
Joie after wo, and wo after gladnesse
And shewed hym ensamples and likenesse
Right as there died neuer man, or he
That he ne liued in yearth in some degree
Right so there liued neuer man, he saied
In this worlde, that somtyme he ne deied
This worlde is but a throughfare full of wo
And we been pilgrimes, passyng to and fro
Death is an ende of euery worldes sore
And ouer all this yet saied he moche more
To this effect, full wisely to exhort
The people, that thei should hem recomfort.
Duke Theseus with all his busie cure
Casteth now, where that the sepulture
Of good Arcite, shall best ymaked bee
And eke moste honourable of degree
And at the last he tooke conclusion
That there as Arcite and Palamon
Had for loue the battaile hem betwene
That in the same selue groue, swete & grene
There as he had his amorous desires
His complaint, and for loue his hote fires
He would make a fire, in whiche the offis
Funerall he might hem all accomplis
He hath anon commaunded to hacke & hew
The okes old, and laie hem all on a rew
In culpons, well araied for to brenne
His officers with swift foote thei renne
And right anon at his commaundement.
And after Theseus hath he sent
After a beare, and it all ouer spread
With clothe of gold, the richest that he had
And of the same sute he clothed Arcite
Upon his handes his gloues white
Eke on his hedde a croune of Laurell grene
And in his hand a swerde full bright & kene
He laied hym bare the visage on the bere
Therewith he wept that pite was to here
And for the people should seen hym all
When it was daie he brought him to the hall
That rorreth of ỹ crie & of the sorowes soun
Tho gan this wofull Theban Palamon
With glitering beard, & ruddie shinyng heres
In clothes blacke, dropped all with teres
And passyng other of wepyng Emelie
The rufullest of all the companie.
And in as moche as the seruice should bee
The more noble, and riche in his degre
Duke Theseus let forth the stedes bryng
That trapped were in stele all glitteryng
And couered with the armes of Dan Arcite
Upon these stedes greate and white

There saten folk, of which one bare his sheld
An other his speare, in his hande held
The third bare with hym a bowe Turkes
Of bret gold was the case and eke the harnes
And ridden forth a pace with sorie chere
Toward the groue, as ye shall after here.

The noblest of the Grekes, that there were
Upon her shoulders caried the bere
With slake pace, and yen redde and white
Throughout the citee, by the maister strete
That spred was al w blak, & that wonder hie
Right of the same is the strete iwrie
Upon the right hande went Egeus
And on the other side duke Theseus
With vessels in her hande of golde full fine
All full of honie, milke, blode, and wine
Eke Palamon, with full greate companie
And after that, came wofull Emelie
With fire in hande, as was that time the gise
To doen the office of funerall seruice

Hie labour, and full greate apparailyng
Was at seruice, and at fire making
That with his grene top the heauen raught
And twentie fadome of bred armes straught
This is to sain, the bowes were so brode
Of strawe first there was laied many a lode.

But how the fire was maken vp on height
And eke the names, how the trees height
As oke, firre, beche, aspe, elder, elme, popelere
Willowe, Holm, Plane, Bore, Chesten, laure
Maple, thorne, beche, ewe, hasell, whipultre
How thei were felde, shall not be tolde for me
Ne how the goddes ronne vp and doun
Disherited of her habitacion
In whiche thei wonned in rest and pees
Nimphes, Faunie, and Amadriades
Ne how the beastes, ne the birdes all
Fledden for feare, when the trees fall
Ne how the ground agast was of the light
That was nat wont to see the Sunne bright
Ne how the fire was couched first with stre
And than with drie sticks clouen a thre
And than with grene wodde, and spicerie
And than with clothe of golde and perrie
And garlondes hangyng with many a floure
The mirre, the ensence, with swete odoure
Ne how Arcite laie emong all this
Ne what richesse about his bodie is
Ne how that Emelie, as was the gise
Put in the fire of funerall seruice
Ne how she souned, whā maked was the fire
Ne what she spake, ne what was her desire
Ne what iewelles men in the fire cast
Whan that the fire was greate and brent fast
Ne how sum cast her sheld, and sum her spere
And of her vestemētes, whiche that thei were
And cuppes full of wine, milke, and blood
Into the fire, that brent as it were wood
Ne how the Grekes with a huge route
Thrise ridden all the fire aboute
Upon the left hande, with a loude shoutyng
And thrise with her speres clateryng
And thrise how the ladies gan crie
Ne how that ladde was homward Emelie
Ne how that Arcite is brent to ashen cold
Ne how the liche wake was hold
All that night, ne how the Grekes plaie
The wake plaies, kepe I nat to saie
Who wrestled best naked, with oile anoint
Ne who bare hym best in euery poinct
I woll not tellen how thei gone
Whom to Athenes, whan the plaie is doen
But shortly to the poinct than woll I wende
And make of my long tale an ende.

By processe and by length of yeres
All stinten is the murnyng and the teres
Of Grekes, by one generall assent
Than semed me there was a Parlement
At Athenes, vpon a certain poinct and caas
Emong the whiche poinctes ispoken was
To haue with certain countres aliaunce
And haue of Thebans fullie obeisaunce
For whiche this noble Theseus anon
Let sende after this gentle Palamon
Unwiste of hym what was the cause & why:
But in his blacke clothes sorowfully
He came at his commaundement on hie
Tho sent Theseus after Emelie.
Whā thei wer set, and husht was the place
And Theseus abidden hath a space
Or any worde came from his wise brest
His yen sette he there hym lest
And with soche a sadde visage, he siked still
And after that, right thus he saied his will
The first mouer of the cause aboue
Whan he first made the faire chaine of loue
Greate was the effect, and hie was his entente
Well wist he why, and what therof he mente
For with that faire chaine of loue he bonde
The fire, the aire, the water, and the londe
In certain bondes, that thei maie nat fle
Thesame prince and that mouer, q he
Hath stablished in this wretched world adon
Certen daies and duracion
To all that are engendred in this place
Ouer the whiche daie thei maie nat pace
All mowe thei yet the daies abredge
There nedeth non auctorite to ledge
For it is proued by experience

But

But that me lift declare my fentence
Then maie men by this order difcerne
That thilke mouer ftable is and eterne
Well maie men knowe, but he be a foole
That euery partie is deriued from his hoole
For nature hath nat taken his beginnyng
Of one parte or cantell of a thyng
But of a thing that perfite is and ftable
Difcendyng fo, till it be corrumpable
And therefore of his wife purueiaunce
He hath fo well beftet his ordinaunce
That fpaces of thinges and progreffions
Shullen endure by fucceffions
And not eterne, without any lye
Thus maieft thou vnderftande and fee at ye
Lo the oke, that hath fo long a norifhyng
Fro the time that it beginneth firft to fpring
And hath fo long a life, as ye maie fee
Yet at the laft, wafted is the tree
Confidereth eke, how that the harde ftone
Under our feete, on whiche we treade & gone
Yet wafteth it, as it lieth in the weie
The brode riuer fumtyme wexeth drie
The greate tounes, fe we wane and wende
Than ye fee that all this thyng hath ende
And man and woman fee fhall we alfo
That nedeth in one of the termes two
That is to fain, in youth or els in age
He mote be dedde, a kyng as well as a page
Some in his bedde, fome in the depe fee
Some in the large field, as ye maie fee
It helpeth not, all goeth that ilke weie
Than maie you fee that all thyng mote deie
What maketh this, but Jupiter the kyng
That is prince, and cauſe of all thyng
Conuertyng all to his proper will
From whiche it is deriued foth to tell
And here again, no creature on liue
Of no degree auaileth for to ſtriue
Than is it wifedome, as thinketh me
To make vertue of neceſſite
And take it well, that we maie not eſchewe
And namely that to vs all is dewe
And who fo grutcheth aught, he doeth folie
And rebell is to hym that all maie gie
And certainly, a man hath moſte honour
To dien in his excellence and flour
When he is ſiker of his good name
Thā hath he don his frēdes ne him no ſhame
And glader ought his frīēdes be of his death
When with honour ifolde is vp the breath
Than whan his name apaled is for age
For all forgetten in his vaſſellage
Than it is beſt, as for a worthie fame
To dien, when he is beſt of name
The contrarie of al this is wilfulneſſe
Why grutchen we? why haue we heuineſſe
That good Arcite of cheualrie the flour
Departed is, with duetie and with honour
Out of this foule prifon, of this life?
Why grutchen here his cofyn and his wife
Of his welfare, that loueth hym fo wele
Can he hem thāk? naie god wote neuer a dele
That bothe his foule, and eke hem offende
And yet thei mowe not her luſtes amende?
What maie conclude of this long ſtorie
But after forowe, I rede vs be merie
And thanke Jupiter of all his grace
And er we departen from this place
I rede we maken of forowes two
One parfite ioie, laſtyng euer mo
And loke now where moſte forowe is herin
There woll I firſt amende and begin
Suſter q he this is my full aſſent
With all the people of my parlement
That gentle Palamon, your owne knight
That ſerueth you, with wil, hert, and might
And euer hath doen, ſith ye firſt hym knewe
That ye ſhall of your grace vpon hym rewe
And take hym for huſbonde and for Lorde
Lene me your hande, for this is our accorde.
Let ſee now of your womanly pite
He is a kynges brother ſoonne parde
And though he were a poore bachelere
Sin he hath ſerued you ſo many a yere
And had for you ſo greate aduerſite
It muſt been conſidered, leueth me
For gentle mercie ought to paſſen right.
Than ſaied he thus to Palamō the knyght
I trowe there nede litle ſarmonying
To make you aſſenten to this thyng
Cometh nere, & taketh your lady by the hond
Bitwirt hem was maked anon the bond
That yight Matrimonie or mariage
By all the counſaile of the baronage
And thus with all bliſſe and melodie
Hath Palamon iwedded Emelie.
And God ỳ all this worlde hath wrought
Sende him his loue, ỳ it hath ſo dere bought
For now is Palamon in all wele
Liuyng in bliſſe, in richeſſe, and in hele
And Emelie him loueth ſo tenderlie
And he her ſerueth ſo gentellie
That neuer was there no word hem bitwene
Of ielouſie, or of any other tene
Thus endeth Palamon and Emelie
And God ſaue all this faire companie.

Here endeth the knightes tale,
and here foloweth the Mil-
lers Prologue,

When

The Millers tale.

When that the knight had thus his tale itold
In all the companie nas there yong ne old
That he ne saied, it was a noble storie
And worthie to be drawen in memorie
And namely the gentiles eucrichone
Our hoste loughe and sware, so mote I gone
This goeth a right, vnbokled is the male
Let see now who shall tell an other tale
For truely, the game is well begonne
Now telleth sir Monke if ye conne
Sumwhat, to quite with the knightes tale
The Miller for dronken was all pale
So that vnnethes vpon his his horse he sat
Ne nolde auale neither hood ne hat
Ne abide no man for his curtesie
But in Pilates voice he began to crie
And swore by armes, blood and bones
I can a noble tale for the nones (tale
With which I wol now quite the knight his
Our hoste saw that he was dronken of ale
And saied: abide Robin leue brother
Sum better man shall tell vs first an other
Abide, and let vs wirche thriftely.
By Gods soule (q he) that woll not I
For I woll speake, or els go my waie
Our hoste answered: tell on a deuill waie
Thou art a foole, thy witte is ouercome
Now herketh q the Miller, all and some
But first I make protestacion
That I am dronke, I knowe it by my soun
And therefore if I mispeake or saie
Wite it the ale of Southwarke, I you praie
For I woll tell a Legende and a life
Bothe of a Carpenter and his wife
How that a clerke set a wrightes cappe
The Reue answered and said stint thy clap
Let be thy leud dronken harlottrie
It is a synne, and eke a greate folie
To apaire any man, or him defame
And eke to bring wiues in soche blame
Thou maiest inough of other thinges sain.
This dronken Miller spake full sone again
And saied: leue brother Oswolde
Who hath no wife is no cokolde
But I saie not therefore that thou art one
There been full good wiues many one
Why art thou angrie with my tale now
I haue a wife parde, as well as thou
Yet nolde I for all the Oxen in my plough
Take vpon me more then inough
To demen of my self that I am one
I woll beleue that I am none
In husbande should not been inquisitife
Of Goddes priuete, ne of his wife
For so he finde Goddes foison there
Of the remnaunt, nedeth not to enquere
What should I more sale, but this Millere
He nolde his worde for no man forbere
But telde his churles tale in this manere
Me forthinketh I shall reherce it here
And therefore, euery gentle wight I praie
Demeth not for Goddes loue, that I saie
Of euill entent, but that I mote reherce
Her tales all, been thei better or werce
Or els fallen some of my matere
And therefore, who so lisse it not to here
Tourne ouer the lefe, and chose an other tale
For ye shall finde inowe greate and smale
Of historial thing that toucheth gentilnesse
And eke moralite, and holinesse
Blame not me, if that ye chose amis
The Miller is a churle, ye knowe well this
So was the Reue eke, and other mo
And harlottrie thei tolde eke bothe two
Auise you, and put me out of blame
And eke men should not make ernest of game.

Here endeth the Millers Prologue: and here after followeth his Tale.

Whilom there was dwelling in Oxenforde
A riche gnofe, that gestes helde to borde
And of his crafte he was a Carpenter
With him ther was dwelling a poore scholer
Had ilearned art, but all his fantasie
Was turned to learne Astrologie
And coud certaine of conclusions
To demen by interrogacions
If that men asken him in certain houres
When ỹ men should haue drought or shoures
Or if men asked him what should befall
Of euery thyng, I maie not reken all
This clerke was cleped Hende Nicholas
Of derne loue he coud and of solas
And therto he was slie and right priuee
And like to a maiden meke to see
A chamber he had in that hostelrie
Alone, withouten any companie
Full fetously dight with herbes sote
And he him self as swete as is the rote
Of Licores, or of any Setuwall
His almagiste, and bookes greate and small
His

His astrelagour, longyng for his arte
His augrim stones lyyng faire aparte
On shelues couched at his beddes hedde
His presse icouered with a foldyng redde
And all aboue there laie a gaie Sautrie
On whiche he made on nightes melodie
So swetely, that all the chamber rong
And *Angelus ad virginem* he song
And after that he song the kynges note
Full oft blessed was his merie throte
And thus the swete clerke his tyme spent
After his friendes findyng and his rent
This Carpenter had wedded newe a wife
Whiche that he loued more than his life
Of eightene yere she was of age
Jelous he was, and kept her straite in cage
For she was wilde, and yong: and he was old
And demed himself to been a cokewold
He knewe not Cato: for his wife was rude
That bade men wed her similitude
Men should wedde after her estate
For youth and elde is often at debate
But sith he was fallen in the snare
He must endure n, as other folke his care
Faire was this yong wife, and therewithall
As any wisele her bodie gentle and small
A seinte she weared, barred all with silke
A barme clothe, as white as morowe milke
Upon her lendes, full of many a gore
Whit was her smock, & embrouded all before
And eke behinde on her colere about
Of cole blacke silke, within and eke without
The tapes of her white volipere
Were of the same sute of her colere
Her filet brode of silke, and set full hye
And sikerly, she had a likerous eye
Full small ipulled were her browes two
And tho were bent, and blacke as any sloo
She was moche more blisfull for to see
Then is the newe Perienet tree
And softer than the woll is of a weather
And by her girdel hong a purse of Leather
Tassed with silke, and perled with Latoun
In all this worlde, to seken up and doun
There nis no man so wise, that couth thence
So gaie a popelote, or so gaie a wenche
Full brighter was the shinyng of her hewe
Than in the toure the Noble forged newe
But of her song, it was so loude and yerne
As any Swalowe sittyng on a berne
Thereto she couthe skippe, and make a game
As any Kidde or Calfe folowyng his dame
Her mouth was swete, as braket or the meth
Or hoxde of apples, lyyng in haie or heth
Wimpling she was, as is a iolie colt
Long as a masse, and upright as a bolt
A broche she bare on her lowe collere
As brode as the bosse of a buckelere
Her shoes were laced on her legges hie
She was a primrose, and pigsnie
For any lorde to liggen in his bedde
Or yet for any good yoman to wedde.
Now sir and eft sire, so befell the caas
That on daie this Hende Nicholas
Fell with this yong wife to rage and pleie
While that her husbonde was at Oseney
As clerkes been full sotell and queinte
And priuely he caught her by the queinte
And saied: I wis but I haue my will
For derne loue of the lemman I spill
And helde her faste by the haunche bones
And saied: lemman loue me well at ones
Or I woll dien also God me saue
And she sprong as a colt in a traue
And with her hedde she wrieth fast awaie
And saied: I woll not kisse thee by my faie
Why let be quod she, let be Nicholas
Or I woll crie out harrowe and alaas
Doe awaie your hondes for your curtesie.
This Nicholas gan mercie for to crie
And spake so faire, and profered him so fast
That she her loue graunted him at last
And swore her othe, by S. Thomas of Kent
That she would been at his commaundemēt
When that she maie her leiser well aspie
My husbande is so full of ielousie
That but ye waite well, and be priue
I wote right well I nam but dedde, quod she
Ye mote be full derne as in this caas
Naie thereof care ye nat, quod Nicholas
A clerke had litherly beset his while
But if he couth a Carpenter begile
And thus thei were accorded, and iswore
To a waten a tyme as I haue saied before
And whē Nicholas had doen thus euery dele
And thanked her about the lendes wele
He kissed her swete, than taketh his Sautrie
And plaieth fast, and maketh melodie
Than fell it thus, that to the parishe cherche
(Christes owne worckes for to werche)
This good wife went upon an holie daie
Her forhedde shone as bright as any daie
So was it washe, when she lete her werke.
Now was there of ỹ chirch a parish clerke
The whiche that was cleped Absolon
Croule was his heere, and as golde it shon
And strouted as a fanne large and brode
Full straight and euen laie his iolie shode
His rode was redde, his yen graie as Goos
With Poles windowes coruen on his shoos

In

The Millers tale.

In hosen redde he went fetously
Girde he was full small and properly
All in a kirtle of light waget
Full faire and thicke been the poinctes set
And therebpon he had a gaie surplise
As white as the blossome on the rise
A merie childe he was, so God me saue
Well coud he let blood, clippe, and shaue
And make a charter of lond, and a quitaunce
In twētie maner coud he trippe and daunce
After the schole of Oxenforde tho
And with his legges casten to and fro
And plaie songes on a small Ribible
Therto he song sometyme a loude quinible
And as well coud he plaie on a Geterne
In all the toune nas brewhous ne Tauerne
That he ne visited with his solas
There any gaie Tapstere was
But soth to saie he was somwhat squaimus
Of fartyng, and of speache daungerous
This Absolon, that was ioily and gaie
Goeth with a Censer on a Sondaie
Censyng the wiues of the parishe faste
And many a louely looke on hem he caste
And namely on this Carpenters wife
To looke on her hym thought a merie life
She was so proper, and swete as Licorous
I dare well saine if she had been a Mous
And he a Catte, he would haue her hēt anon
This Parishe clerke, this ioily Absolon
Hath in his harte soche a loue longyng
That of no wife he tooke none offeryng
For curtesie he saied he would none
The moone, when it was night bright shone
And Absolon his Geterne hath itake
For paramours he thought for to wake
And forth he goeth, ielous and amerous
Till he came to the Carpenters hous
A little after the Cockes had icrowe
And dressed hym by a shot windowe
That was bpon the Carpenters wall
He singeth in his boice gentle and small
Now dere ladie, if thy will be
I praie you that ye would rewe on me
Full well accordyng to his Geternyng.
This Carpenter awoke, & heard him syng
And spake vnto his wife anon
what Alison, heres thou not Absolon
That chaūteth thus vnder our boures wall?
And she answerd her husebond there withal
Yes God wote, I heare hym euery dele
This passeth forth, what wol ye bet thā wele
Fro daie to daie, this ioily Absolon
So woeth her, that hym was wo bygon
He waketh all the night, and all the daie
He kēbeth his lockes brode, & made him gaie
He woeth her by meanes and brocage
And swore, he would been her owne page
He singeth brokkyng as a Nightingale
He sent her piment, methe, and spiced ale
And wafres pipyng hotte out of the glede
And for she was of toun, he profered her mede
For some folke woll be wonne for richesse
And sum for strokes, and sum with gētlenesse
Sumtime to shewe his lightnesse & maistrie
He plaieth Herodes on a scaffolde hie
But what auaileth hym, as in this caas?
So loueth she this Hende Nicholas
That Absolon maie blowe the Buckes horne
He ne had for his labour but a scorne
And thus she maketh Absolon her Ape
And all his request tourneth to a iape
For soth this prouerbe it is no lie
Men saie thus alwaie, the nye slie
Maketh the ferre loue to be lothe
For though that Absolon be wood or wrothe
Bicause that he ferre was from her sight
Thus nye Nicholas stoode in his light.
But now beare thee well Hende Nicholas
For Absolon maie waile and syng alas
And so bifell it on a Saterdaie
This Carpenter was gone to Osnaie
And Hende Nicholas and Alison
Accorded were to this conclusion
That Nicholas should shapen hem a while
This selie ielous Carpenter to begile
And if so be the game went a right
She should slepe in his armes all night
For this was his desire and hers also
And right anon, without wordes mo
This Nicholas no lenger would tarie
But doeth full soft vnto his chamber carie
Bothe meate and drinke, for a daie or tweie
And her housebonde bade her for to saie
If that he asked after Nicholas
She should saie she nist where he was
Of all that daie she sawe hym not with ye
She trowed he was in some maladie
For no crie that her maide coud call
He nolde answere, for naught ỹ might befal.
Thus passeth forth all the ilke Saterdaie
That Nicholas still in his chamber laie
And ete, dranke, and slept, & did what him list
Till Sundaie, that the Sunne goeth to rest
This selie Carpenter hath great marueile
Of Nicholas, or what thing might hym eile
And saied: I am a drad by sainct Thomas
It stondeth not aright with Nicholas
God shilde that he died sodainly
This worlde is now full tikell sekerly

I saw to day a corse borne to cherche
That now on mōday last I saw him werche
Go vp (q̃ he vnto his knaue) anone
Cleape at his dore, & knocke fast with a stone
Loke how it is, and tel me boldely.
This knaue went vp full sturdely
And at the chambre dore, while that he stode
He cried and knocked as he were woode
What how? what do ye maister Nicholay?
How may ye slepe al this long day?
But all for nought he herde not a worde.
An hole he found ful low vpon a borde
There as the catte was wont into crepe
And at that hole he loked in ful depe
And at the last he had of him a sight.
This Nicholas sate euer gaping vpright
As he had keyked on the newe mone
A downe he goeth, & tolde his maister sone
In what aray he saw this ylke man.
This carpenter to blissen him began
And said: now helpe vs seynt Frideswide
A man wot lytle what shal him betide
This man is fallen, with his Astronomie
In some woodnesse, or in some agonie
I thought aye well how it should be
Men shoulden not know of Gods priuete
Ye blessed be alway the leude man
That naught but onely his bylefe can.
Right so ferde an other clerke w̃ astronomy
He walked into the feldes for to pry
Upon the sterre, to wete what should befall
Til he was in a marlpit yfall
He saw not that, yet by sainte Thomas
Me reweth sore on Hinde Nicholas
He shal be arated out of his studiyng
If that I may, by Jesus heuen king.
Get me a staffe, that I maie vnderspore
While that thou Robyn heuest vp the dore
He shal out of his studieng, as I gesse
And to the chamber dore he gan him dresse
His knaue was a strong carle for the nones
And by the haspe bare vp the dore at ones
Into the flore the dore fell anone.
This Nicholas sate as stil as any stone
And euer gaped vpward into the eyre.
This carpenter wend he were in dispeyre
And hente him by the shoulders mightily
And shoke him harde, and cried spitously
What Nicholas, what how loke a doun
Awake, and thinke on Christes passion
I crouche ẏ from elues, & frō wicked wightes
Therwith the nightspel he said anon rightes
On four halues, of the house about
An on the dreshfolde of the dore without
Jesu Christ, and sainte Benedight
Blisse this house from euery wicked wight
Fro the nightes mare the wite Pater noster
Where wonnest thou saint Peters suster?
And at the last this Hende Nicholas
Gan for to sike sore, and said alas
Shal al this world be lost eftsones now?
This carpenter answerd: what sayst thou?
What thinke on god, as we do men ẏ swinke
This Nicholas answerd fetche me drinke
And after wol I speke in priuete
Of certaine thinges, that toucheth the & me
I wol tellen it none other man certaine.
This carpēter goth doun, & cometh againe
And brought of mighty ale a large quarte
And whā ẏ eche of hem had dronkē his parte
This Nicholas, his dore fast shette
And doune the carpenter by him sette
And said: Johan hoste myn lefe and dere
Thou shalt vpon thy trouthe swere me here
That to no wight ẏ shalt my counsell wrey
For it is Christes counsaile that I say
And if thou tel it any man, thou art forlore
For this vengeaūce thou shalt haue therfore
That if thou wray me, thou shalt be woode.
Nay Christ it forbid for his holy bloode
Od tho this sely man, I am no bladde
Ne though I say it, I am not lefe to gabbe
Say what thou wolte, I shal it neuer tell
To child ne wife, by him that harowed hell.
Now John (q̃ Nicholas) I wol nat lye
I haue yfounden in mine astrologie
As I haue loked in the moone bright
That now on monday next, at quarter night
Shal fall a rayne, & that so wild and woode
That halfe so great was neuer Noes floode
This world (he said) in lesse than in an houre
Shal al be dreynte, so hidous is the shoure
Thus shal mankinde drenche, & lese her life.
This carpēter answerd & said: alas mi wife
And shal she drenche? Alas myn Alisoun
For sorow of this he fel almost adoun
And said: is there no remedy in this caas?
Yes yes ful good (q̃ Hende Nicholas)
If thou wolt werche after lore and rede
Thou maist not werchē after thin own hede
For thus saith Salomon, that was ful trew
Worke al by coūsayle, & thou shalte not rew.
And if thou wilt werken by good counsaile
I vndertake, without maste or saile
Yet shal I saue her, and the and me.
Hast thou not herde how saued was Noe?
Whā that our lord had warned him byforne
That al the world with water shuld be lorne
Yes (q̃ the carpenter) ful yore a go.
Hast thou not herde (q̃ Nicholas) also?

The Millers tale.

The sorow of Noe with his felesshippe
Or that he might gete his wife to shippe
Him had leuer, I dare wel vndertake
At thilke time, than al his wethers blake
That she had a ship her self alone
And therfore wost thou what is best to done?
This asketh haste, and of an hasty thing
Men may not preche ne make tarying
Anon go get vs faste into this inne
A kneding trowe or els a kemelyn
For ech of vs, but loke that they ben large
In which men mowe swimmē as in a barge
And haue therin vitailes sufficiant
But for a day, fye on the remenant
The water shall aslake and gon away
Aboute prime vpon the next day
But Robyn may not wetē of this thy knaue
Ne eke thy maide Gille, I may not saue
Aske not why: for though thou aske me
I wol not tel goddes priuete
Suffiseth the, but if thy wittes be madde
To haue as great a grace as Noe hadde
Thy wife shall I wel saue out of doute
Go now thy way, and spede the here aboute
But whan thou hast for her, & the, and me
Ygetten vs these kneding tubbes thre
Than shalt thou hange hem in ỹ rofe full hie
That no man of our purueyaunce espie
And whan ỹ hast don thus as I haue saide
And hast our vitaile faire in hem ylaide
And eke an axe to smithe the corde a two
Whan ỹ the water cometh, that we may go
And breake an hole on hie vpon the gable
Vnto the garden warde, ouer the stable
That we may frely passen forth our way
Whan that the great shoure is gon away
Thā shal thou swim as mery I vndertake
As doeth the white ducke after her drake
Than wol I clepe, how Alison, how John
Be mery: for the floode wol passe anon
And thou wolt sain, haile maister Nicholay
Good morow for I se wel that it is day
And than we shal be lordes al our life
Of al the world, as was Noe and his wife
But of one thing I warne the ful right
Be wel auised on that ylke night
That we ben entred into the shippes borde
That none of vs ne speke not a worde
Ne clepe ne cry, but ben in his prayere
For it is goddes own heste dere.
Thy wife & thou mote hange fer a twynne
For that bytwixt you shall be no sinne
No more in lokīg than there shal in dede
This ordinaunce is said, go god the spede
To morow at night, whā men ben al a slepe
In to our kneding tubbes woll we crepe
And sitten there, abiding goddes grace
Go now thy way, I haue no lenger space
To make of this no lenger sermoning
Men sayn thus: send the wise, & say nothing
Thou art so wise, it nedeth the not to teche
Go saue our lyues, and that I the beseche.
This sely carpenter goth forth his way
Ful ofte he said alas, and welaway
And to his wife he tolde his priuete
And she was ware, and knewe it bet than he
What al this queinte cast was for to sey
But natheles, she ferde as she would dey
And said: alas, go forth thy way anone
Helpe vs to shape, or we be deed echone
I am thy trewe verey wedded wife
Go dere spouse, and helpe to saue our life.
Lo, which a great thing is affeccion
Men may dye of ymaginacion
So depe may impression be take.
This sely carpenter beginneth to quake
Him thinketh verily that he may se
Noes flodde come waltring as the see
To drenchen Alison, his hony dere
He wepeth, waileth, and maketh sory chere
He siketh, with many a sory thought
He goth, and getteth him a kneding trough
And after a tubbe, and a kemelin
And priuely he sent hem to his in
And hinge hem in the rofe ful priuely
His owne hand, he made him ladders thre
To climben by the ronges, and by the stalkes
Into the tubbes hongyng by the balkes
And hem vitailed, both trough and tubbe
With breed and chese, & good ale in a iubbe
Suffising right ynowe, as for a day
But er that he had made all this array
He sent his knaue, and eke his wenche also
Vpon his nede to London for to go
And on the monday, whan it drowe to night
He shette his doore, without candel light
And dressed al thing, as it should be
And shortly clomben vp al thre
They seten still not fully a forlong way
Now pater noster clum, said Nicholay
And clum & Johan, and clum said Alison
This carpenter said his deuocion
And stil he sitte, and biddeth his prayere
Awayting on the rayne, if he it here.
The deed slepe, for wery bisinesse
Fel on this carpenter, right as I gesse
About curfewe time, or litell more
For trauaile of his goste he groneth sore
And eft he routeth, for his heed misslay
And doun of ỹ ladder than stalketh Nicholay

And

And Alison ful soone after she spedde
Without woordes mo thei went to bedde
There as the carpenter was woned to lye
There was the reuel, and the melody
And thus lieth Alison and Nicholas
In bliselle of mirthe and solas
Til that the bel of laudes gan to ring
And freres in the chaunsell gon to sing.
This parish clerke, this amerous Absolon
That is for loue alway so wo bygon
Upon the monday was at Oseney
With company, him to disporte and play
And asked vpon a case a cloistere
Ful priuely, after John the carpentere
And he drew him a parte out of the chirche
And said I not: I saw him not here wirche
Sithe saturday, I trow that he be went
For timbre, there our Abbot hath him sent
For he is wont for timbre for to go
And dwellen at the graunge a day or two
Or els he is at his house certaine
Wher that he be, I can not sothly saine.
This Absolon, ful ioly was and light
And thought, now is my time to walk al night
For sekerly, I saw him nat stering
About his doore, sithy day began to spring
So mote I thriue, I shal at cockes crowe
Ful priuely knocke at his windowe
That stant full lowe vpon his boures wall
To Alison wol I now tellen all
My loue longing: for yet I shall nat misse
That at the leest way I shall her kisse
Some maner comforte shal I haue parfaye
My mouth hath itched al this long daie
That is a signe of kissing at the leest
Al night me mette eke, that I was at a feest
Therfore I wol go slepe an hour or twey
And al the night than wol I walke and pley.
Whan that the first cocke hath crow anon
Up rist this ioly louer Absolon
And him arayeth gay, and in queinte deuice
But first he cheweth greyns and licorice
To smellen soote, or he had kempte his here
Under his tonge a trueloue he bere
For therby he wende to ben gracious
He rometh to the carpenters house
And stil he stante vnder the shot windowe
Unto his brest it raught, it was so lowe
And softe he knocked, with a semly soun.
What do ye honycombe, swete Alisoun?
My fayre birde, my swete sinamome
Awaketh lemman myn, and speketh to me
Ful litel thinken ye vpon my wo
That for your loue I swelt there as I go
No wonder is though I swelt and swete
I mourne as doth the lambe after the tete
I wys lemman, I haue suche loue longing
That like a turtle trew is my mourning
I may not eaten no more than may a maide
Go fro the window iacke fool, she saide
As helpe me god and swete saint Jame
I loue a nother, or els I were to blame
Wel bet than the (by Jesu) Absolon
Go forthe thy way, or I wol caste a stone
And let me slepe, a twenty diuel way
Alas q Absolon, and weia way
That true loue was euer so yuel bystette
Than kille me, sin it may be no bette
For Jesus loue, and for the loue of me.
Wilt thou thā go thy way therwith q she
Ye certes lemman, q this Absolon
Than make the redy (q she) I come anon
And vnto Nicholas she said still
Now peace, and thou shalt laugh thy till
This Absolon doun set him vpō his knees
And said: I am a lorde at al degrees
For after this, I hope there cometh more
Lemman thy grace, swete birde thy store.
The window she vndoth, and that in haste
Haue do (q she) and spede the caste
Let not our neighbours the aspy.
This Absolō gan wipe his mouth ful drie
Derke was the night, as pitche or cole
And at the window she put out her ers hole
And Absolon him felte, neither bet ne wers
But with his mouthe he kist her bare ers
Ful sauorly, or he were ware of this.
Aback he sterte, and thought it was amis
For wel he wist, a woman had no berde
He felte a thing al rowe, and long herde
And said: fye, alas what haue I do?
Te he q she, and clapte the window to
And Absolon goeth forth a sory paas
A berde a berde, said Hende Nicholas
By goddes corpus, this goeth faire and wele.
This sely Absolon herde it euery dele
And on his lippe he gan for angre bite
And to him selue he said, I shal the quite
Who rubbeth now, who frotheth now his lips
With dust, with sonde, with straw, with chips
But Absolon: that saith ful often alas
My soule betake I to Sathanas
But me were leuer than al this toun, q he
Of this dispite auenged for to be.
Alas (q he) alas that I ne had ybleynt
His hotte loue is colde, and all yqueint
For fro the time that he had kisse her ers
Of paramours he set not a hers
For he was healed of his maladye
Ful ofte paramoures he gan defie

And wepe as dothe a childe that is ybete
A lotte pace he wente ouer the strete
Unto a smith, men callen dan Gerueys
That in his forge smiteth plow harneys
He sharpeth shares, and culters besily
This Absolon knocketh all easily
And said vndo Gerueys, and that anon
What who art thou? It am I Absolon
What Absolon, what for Christes swete tre
Why rise ye so rathe? ey benedicite
What eyleth you? sum gay gyrle god it wote
Hath brought you thus on the berytote
By saynte note, ye wote wel what I mene.
This Absolon ne raught not a bene
Of al his play, no word againe he gaffe
He had more to we on his distaffe
Than Geruays knew, and said frend so dere
The hote cultre, in the chymeney here
As lene it me, I haue therewith to done
I woll bring it the againe ful sone.
Geruays answered: certes were it golde
Or in a poke nobles al vntolde
Thou shouldest it haue, as I am true smith
Eye Christes fote, what wol ye don therw?
Therof (q Absolon) be as be may
I shall wel tellen the by to morow day
And caught the culter by the colde stele
Ful softe out at the dore gan he stele
And went vnto the carpenters wal
He coughed first, and knocked there withal
Upon the window, right as he did ere.
This Alison answerd: who is there
That knocketh so? I warante he is a thefe.
Why nay (q he) god wot my swete lefe
I am thyn Absolon, thyn owne derling
Of gold (q he) I haue the brought a ring
My mother yaue it me, so god me saue
Ful fine it is, and therto wel ygraue
This wol I yeue the, if thou me kisse.
This Nicholas was risen for to pisse
And thought he would amenden all the iape
He should kisse his ers er that he shape
And vp the window did he hastely
And out his ers he put ful priuely
And ouer the buttocke, to the haunche boon
And therwith spake this clerke, this Absolon
Spek swete birde, I not where thou arte.
This Nicholas anon let fleen a farte
As great as it had ben a thunder dent
That with the stroke he was well ny yblent
And he was redy with his yron hote
And Nicholas in the arse he smote.
Of goeth the skin an hondbrede aboute
The hotte cultor brende so his toute
And for the smert he wende for to die
As he were woode, he gan for to crye
Helpe, water, water, for goddes herte.
This carpenter out of his slomber sterte
And herde one cry water, as he were woode
And thought, alas now cometh Noes floode
And sette him vp without wordes mo
And with an axe, he smote the corde a two
And doun goth al, he found neither to sell
Breed ne ale, but doun shortly he fell
Upon the flore, and there a swowne he lay.
Up sterte than Alison and Hende Nicholay
And cried out, and harrow in the strete
The neighbours, both smal and grete
In ronne, for to gauren on this man
That aswoune lay, palishe and wan
For with that fall broken hath he his arme
But stonden he must vnto his owne harme
For whan he spake, he was yborne adoun
With Hende Nicholas, and Alisoun
They tolde euery man, that he was woode
He was agaste so of Noyes floode
Through fantasie, that of his vanite
He had getten him kneding tubbes thre
And had hem honged in the rofe aboue
And that he prayed hem for goddes loue
To sitten in the roofe par company
The folke gan laughen at his fantasy
And in to the roofe they kyken and they gape
And turned al his ernest into a iape
For what so this carpenter answerde
It was for naught, no man his reason herde
With othes great, he was yswore adoun
That he was holden wood in al that toun
For eueriche clerke anon helde with other
They said ỹ man was wod, my leue brother
And euery wight gan laughen at this strife
Thus swiued was the carpenters wife
For al his keping, and his ielousie
And Absolon hath kist her nether eye
And Nicholas is shalded in the toute
This tale is done, and god saue al the route.

Here endeth the Millers tale:
and herafter foloweth the
Reues Prologue.

When folke had laughed at this nyce caas
Of Absalon and Hynd Nicholas
Dyuers folke dyuersly they saide
But for the more part they lough and playde
Ne at this tale I saw no man him greue
But it were onely Dswolde the Reue

Bicause

Bycause he was of carpenters craste
A litell yre in his herte ylaste
He gan to grutchen and blamen it a lite
Sothly q he, ful wel couth I the quite
With blering of a proude millers eye
If that me list to speke of ribaudrye
But ek I am old, me lust not play for age
Grasse time is done, my fodder is forage
This white toppe writeth myn olde yeres
For cõtime yolow was, now white ben myn
But yet I fare as doth an openers (heres
That ylke frute is euer lenger the wers
Tyl it be rotten in mollok, or in stre
We olde men, I dreden so fare we
Till we be rotten can we not be ripe
We hoppen alway, while the world wol pipe
For in our wyl there stiketh euer a naile
To haue an hore heed and a grene taile
As hath a leke, for though our might be gone
Our wil desireth foly euer in one
For whã we may not don, thã wol we speken
Yet in our asshen olde, is fyre yreken
Four gledes han we, whiche I shall deuise
Auaunting, lieng, angre, and couetise
These four sparkles longen on to elde
Our olde limmes mowe wel ben vnwelde
But will ne shall not faile, that is sothe
And yet haue I alway a coltes tothe
As many a yere as it is passed henne
Syn that my tappe of life began to renne
For sikerly, whan I was borne anone
Dethe drowe the tappe of life, and let it gone
And euer sins hath the tappe yronne
Till that almost al emptie is the tonne
The stremc of life now droppeth on ỹ chimbe
The sely tonge may wel ringe and climbe
Of wretchednes, that passed is full yore
With olde folke saue dotage is no more.
Whan ỹ our host had herde this sermoning
He gan to speke as lordly as a king
And said: what amounteth al this witte?
What shall we speke all daie of holy writte?
The diuell made a Reue to preche
Or a souter a shipman, or a leche.
Say forth thy tale, and tary not the time
Lo Depforde, and it is halfe way prime
Lo Grenewiche, that many a shrewe is in
It were time thy tale for to begin
Now sirs q this Oswolde the Reue
I pray you al, that ye not you greue
That I answere, and somdele set his houke
For lefull it is with force, force of houke.
This dronken Miller hath ytolde vs here
How that begiled was a carpentere
Parauenture in knowne, for I am one
And by your leaue, I shall him quite anon
Right in his churles termes woll I speke
I pray to God his necke mote breke
He can well in mine eye sene a stalke
But in his owne he can not sene a balke.

Here endeth the Reues prologue.

Here beginneth the Reues tale.

AT Trompyngton, not far fro Cambridge
There goth a broke, and ouer that a bridge
Upon the whyche broke ther stant a mell
And this is very soth, as I you tell
A Miller was there dwelling many a day
As any pecocke he was proude and gay
Pypen he couthe, and fishen, and nettes bete
And turne cuppes, and wel wrastle and shete
Aye by his belte he bare a long panade
And of a swerde ful trenchaũt was the blade
A joly popere bare in his pouche
Ther nas no man for perill durst him touche
A Sheffelde thwitel bare he in his hose
Round was his face, & camused was his nose
As pilled as an ape was his skull
He was a market beater at the full
There durst no wight honde on him ledge
But he ne swore he shulde abedge
A theefe he was forsothe, of corne and mele
And that a slie, and vsaunt for to stele
His name was hoten Deynous Simkyn
A wife he had, comen of noble kyn
The parson of the toune her father was
With her he yafe ful many a panne of bras
For that Simkyn should in his bloode alye
She was yfostred in a nonnerye
For Simkyn wolde no wife, as he saide
But she were well ynourished, and a maide
To saue his astate of yomanrie
And she was proude, and pert as a pie
A full fayre sight was it vpon hem two
On holy daies byfore her would he go
With his tipet wounden about his heed
And she came after in a gite of reed
And Simkyn had hosen of the same
Ther durst no wight clepen her but dame
Was none so hardy, that went by the way
That with her ones durst rage or play
But if he woulde be slaine of Simkin

with pauade, or with knife, or bodkyn
For ielous folkes ben perillous euermo
Algates they would her wiues wende so
And eke for she was somdele smoterliche
She was as digne as water in a diche
And as full of honer, and of besmare
As though that a lady should her spare
What for her kinred, and her norterly
That she had lerned in the nonnery.

A doughter had they betwirt hem two
Of twenty yere, withouten any mo
Sauing a child that was of halfe yere of age
In cradell it lay, and was a proper page
This wenche thicke and wel ygrowen was
With camesid nose, and eyen gray as glas
With buttockes brode, & brestes round & hye
But right faire was her heare I wol nat lye

The person of the toun, for she was so faire
In purpose was to maken her his heyre
Both of his catell, and of his mesuage
And straunge he made it of her mariage
His purpose was to bestowen her hie
Into some worthy blode of auncetrie
For holy churches good mote ben dispended
On holy churches blode that is descended
Therfore he would, his holy blode honour
Though that he holy church should deuour.

Great soken hath this Miller out of dout
With whete and malte, of all the land about
And namely there was a great college
Nen clepen it the Solere hall of Cambrege
Ther was her whete & eke her malt iground
And on a day it happed in a stound
Sicke lay the Manciple, on a malady
Nen wenden wisely that he should dy
For which this miller stale both whete & corn
An hundred time more than before
For ther before, he stale but curteisly
But he now was a theue outrageously
For which the warden chidde and made fare
But therof set the Miller nat a tare
He craked, bosted, and swore it nas not so

Than were ther ynge poore scolers two
That dwelten in the hall, of whiche I say
Testise they were, and lusty for to play
And onely for her mirthe, and her reuelry
Upon the warden busily they cry
To yeue hem leaue, but a litel stounde
To gon to mill, to se her corne ygrounde
And hardely they durst lay her necke
The Miller shuld not steale hem half a pecke
Of corne by sleight, ne by force hem reue.

And at the last the warden yaue hem leue
Iohan hight that one, & Aleyn hight ỹ other
Of a town they wer both, ỹ hight Strother
Farre in the North, can I nat tell where

This Aleyn maketh all redy his gere
And on a horse, the sacke he cast anon
Forth goth Aleyn the clerke, and also Iohn
With good swerde & bucheler by her side
Iohan knew the way, him nedeth no gide
And at the mil dore the sacke down he layth

Aleyn spake first: alhayle Simkē in fayth
How fares thy faire doughter, and thy wife?

Aleyn welcom (q Simken) by my life
And Iohn also: how now? what do ye here?
By god Simond (q Iohn) nede has no pere
Him behoueth serue himself ỹ has no swayn
Or els he is a fole, as clerkes sayn
Our Manciple I hope he will be deed
Swa werkes aye the wanges in his heed
And therfore is I come, and eke Aleyn
To grinde our corne & cary it home agayn
We pray you spede vs heme in that ye may

It shalbe done, q Simken, be my fay
What wolt you don, while it is in hande
By god, right by the hopper wol I stande
Nd Iohn: & sen how gates the corn goth in
Yet saw I neuer by my father kyn
How that the hopper wagges to and fra

Aleyn answerede: Iohan wilt thou swa
Than woll I beneth by my croune
And se how the mele falles adoune
Into the troghe, that shalbe my disporte
Nd John, in fay I may ben one of your sorte
I is as yll a Miller as is ye.

This Miller smilleth at her nicite
And thought al nys don but for a wyle
They wene that no man may hem begile
But by my thrifte, yet shall I blere her eye
For all the sleight in her philosofie
The more queinte clerkes that they make
The more woll I steale whan I take
In stede of flour yet wol I geue hem brenne
The gretest clerkes ben not the wisest menne
As whilom to the wolfe spake the Mare
Of all her art counte I not a tare

Out at the dore he goeth full priuely
Whan that he saw his time, subtelly
He loked vp and doun, til he had yfounde
The clerkes horse, ther as he stode ybounde
Behind the Mill, vnder a lessell
And to the horse he goth him faire and well
He strippeth of the bridel right anon.

And when ỹ horse was lose, he gan to gon
Towarde the fen, there wilde mares rinne
And forth, w weye, through thicke & thinne
The Miller goeth agayn, no word he said
But doth his note, and w these clerkes plaid
Til that her corne was faire & wel iground

And

And when the meale was sacked and ibound
This Jhon goth out, & found her hors away
And gan to crie, harowe and welaway
Our horse is loste Alein for Goddes benes
Step on thy feete man, come forth al atenes
Alas our warden has his palfrey lorne.
This Alein al forgate both mele and corne
All was out of mynde his husbondrie
what, whilke waie is he gon: he gan to crie
The wife came leping inward at a renne
She saied alas, he goeth to the fenne
with wilde Mares, as fast as he maie go
Unthanke come on his hond, ỹ bond hym so
And he that better should haue knit the rein
Alas ỹ Jhon, Alein for Christes pein
Laie doune thy sworde, & I shal mine alswa
I is full swift God wete as is a raa
By Goddes sale he shall not shape vs bathe:
why ne hadest thou put the capel in ỹ lathe:
Ill heile Alein by God thou is a fonne
These selie clerkes han full fast ironne
Toward the fenne Alein and eke Jhon
And whā the Miller saw that thei wer a gon
He halse a bushell of her floure hath take
And bad his wife knede it in a kake
He saied, I trowe the clerkes were aferde
Yet can a Miller make a clerkes berde
For all her art, yet let hem gon her waie
Lo where thei gon, let the children plaie
Thei get hym not so lightly by my croune.
These selie clerkes rennen vp and doune
With kepe kepe, iosta, wartherere
Go whistle thou, and I shall kepe hym here
But shortly, till it was very night
Thei couth not, thogh thei did all her might
Her capell catche, he ranne awaie so fast
Till in a diche thei caught hym at the last.
werie and wete as beastes in the rain
Cometh sely Jhon, & with him cometh Alein
Alas (ỹ Jhon) the daie that I was borne
Now are we driuen to bethen and to shorne
Our corne is stole, men woll vs fooles call
Bothe the warden, and our felowes all
And namely the Miller, waila waie
Thus plaineth Jhon, as he goth by the waie
Toward the Mill, and bayarde in his honde
The Miller sittyng by the fire he fonde
For it was night, and ferther might thei nozt
But for the loue of God thei hym besought
Of herbrough and ease, as for her peny.
The Miller saied ayen, if there been any
Soche as it is, yet shall ye haue your part
My house is straite, but ye haue lerned art
Ye can by argument make a place
A mile brode, of twentie foote of space
Let see now if this place maie suffice
Or make it romer with spech, as is your gise
Now Simond (saied Jhon) by S. Cutberde
Aye is thou mery, and that is faire answerde
I haue herd sai, mē should takē of twa thinges
Swilke as he findes, or swilke as he bringes
But specially I praie thee host dere
Get vs sum meat & drinke, and make vs chere
And we will paie truely at the full
with empties hond, men maie no haukes tull
Lo here our siluer redie for to spende.
The Miller to ỹ toune his doughter sende
For ale and bread and rosted hem a goos
And bound her hors he shuld no more go loos
And in his owne chamber he made a bedde
with shetes and with chalons faire ispredde
Not from his owne bedde, ten fote or twelue
His doughter had a bedde all by her selue
Right in the same chamber, by and by
It might be no bette, and the cause why
There was no roumer herbrough in ỹ place
Thei soupen, & thei speken of mirthe & solace
And dronken euer strong ale at best
About midnight went thei to rest
Well hath this Miller vernished his hedde
Full pale he was for drōken, & nothing redde
He galpeth, and he speketh through his nose
As he were in the quachē, or in the pose
To bedde he goeth, and with hym his wife
As any Jaie was she light and iolife
So was her iolie whistell well iwette
The cradell at the beddes feete was sette
To rocken, and to yeue the childe to sucke
And whan that dronken was al in the crudde
To bedde went the doughter right anon
To bedde goeth Alein and eke Jhon
There nas no more, hem neded no dwale
This Miller hath so wisely bibbed ale
That as an hors he snorteth in his slepe
Ne of his taile behinde he tooke no kepe
His wife bare to hym a bordon well strong
Men might hem heare rounte a forlong
The wenche routeth eke par compagnie.
Alein the clerke, that heard this melodie
He poked on Johan, and saied: slepest thou:
Herdst thou euer swilke a sang er now:
Lo swilke a couplyng is it wirt hem all
A wilde fire on her bodies fall,
who heard euer swilke a ferly thyng
ye, thei shall haue the floure of euill endyng
All this lang night tides me no rest
But yet naforce, all shall be for the best
For Jhon (saied he) as euer mote I thriue:
If that I maie, yon wenche woll I swiue
Some esement hath lawe shapen vs

For Johan, there is a lawe that saieth thus
That if a man in one poinct been a greued
That in an other he shall be releued
Our corne is stollen, sothly it is no naie
And we haue had an euill fit to daie
And sin I shall haue none amendement
Again my losse I will haue myne esement
By Goddes sale, it shall none other be.
This Johan answered: Alein, auise thee
The Miller is a perilous man, he saied
And if that he out of his slepe abraied
He might doen vs bathe a vilanie
Alein answered: I coũt hym not worth a flie
And vp he rest, and by the wenche he crept.
This wenche laie vpright, and fast slept
Till he so nye was, er she might aspie
That it had been to late for to crie
And shortly for to sain, thei were at one
Now plaie Alein, for I woll speake of Jhon.
This Jhon laie still a forlong waie or two
And to hymself he maketh routh and wo
Alas (q he) this is a wicked iape
Now maie I saie, I is but an Ape
Yet hath my felowe somwhat for his harme
He hath the Millers doughter in his arme
He auntreth hym, and hath his nede ispedde
And I lie as a drasse sacke in my bedde
And whan this iape is tolde an other deie
I shall be holde a dasse, or a coheneie
I woll arise, and auntre me it by my saie
Unhardie is vnsely, thus men saie.
And vp he rose, and softely he went
Unto the cradell, and in his arme it hent
And bare it softly to his beddes fete
Sone after the wife her routyng lete
And gan awake, and went her out to pisse
And came again, and gan the cradell misse
And groped here & there, but she found none
Alas (q she) I had almoste misgone
I had almoste gone to the clerkes bedde
Eye benedicite, than had I foule ispedde
And forthy she goeth, till she the cradell fonde
She gropeth alwaie further with her honde
And found the bedd, & thought nat but good
Bicause that the cradell by it stoode
And nist where she was, for it was derke
But faire and well she crept in by the clerke
And lieth full stil, & wold haue caught a slepe
Within a while this Jhon the clerke vp lepe
And on this good wife he laied full sore
So merie a fit had she nought full yore
And pyked hard and depe, as he were madde
This iolie life haue these two clerkes ladde
Till that the thirde cocke began to syng
Alein waxe werie in the daunyng
For he had swonken all the long night
And saied, fare well Malin swete wight
The daie is comen, I maie no lenger bide
But euermo, where so I go or ride
I am thine owne clerke, so haue I hele.
Now dere lemman (q she) go, farewele
But or thou go, one thyng I woll thee tell
When thou wendest hom ward by the Well
Right at the enter of the doore behinde
Thou shalt a cake of halfe a bushell finde
That was imaked of thyne owne meale
Whiche that I helpe my sire to steale
And good lemman God thee saue and kepe
And with that worde she gan almost to wepe
Alein vprist and thought er it dawe
He would go crepe in by his felawe
And found the cradell with his hande anon
By God thought he, all wrong haue I gon
My hedde is tottie of my swinke to night
That maketh me that I go not aright
I wot wel that by the cradel I haue misse go
Here lieth the Miller and his wife also
And forthy he goeth on twentie deuill waie
Unto the bedde, there as the Miller laie
He wende haue cropen by his felowe Jhon
And by the Miller he crept in anon
And caught hym by the necke, & soft he spake
And saied: Jhon, thou swinesshed awake.
For Christes soule, and here a noble game
For by that lorde, that called is sainct Jame
As I haue thrise in this short night
Swiued the Millers doughter bolt vpright
Whilest thou hast, as a coward been agaste.
Ye false harlot (q the Miller) haste
A false traitour, false clerke (q he)
Thou shalt be dedde by Goddes dignite
Who durst be so bolde to disparage
My doughter, that is come of soche linage
And by the throte bolle he caught Alein
And he hym hent dispitously again
And on the nose he smote hym with his feste
Doune ran the blood streme vpon his breste
And in the flore, with mouth and nose ibroke
Thei walowen, as doeth pigges in a poke
And vp thei gon, and doune ayene anon
Till that the Miller spurned on a stone
And doune he fell backward vpon his wife
That wist nothyng of this nice strife
For she was fall a slepe a littell wight
With Jhon ꝑ clerke, that waked had al night
And with the fall out of her slepe she braied
Helpe holie crosse of Bromholme she saied
In manus tuas, lorde to thee I call
Awake Simonde, the fende is on me fall
My harte is broken, helpe I am but dedde

There

There lieth one on my wombe & on my hedde
Helpe Simkin, for these false clerkes fight
Th, 3 Jhon stert vp, as fast as euer he might
And graspeth by the walles to and fro
To finde a staffe, and she stert vp also
And knewe the estres bet than did this Jhon
And by the wall she founde a staffe anon
And sawe a litell shemeryng of a light
For at an hole in shone the Moone bright
And by that light she sawe hem bothe two
But sikerlie she nist who was who
But as she sey a white thyng in her ye
And when she gan this white thing aspie
She wende the clerke had weared a voluper
And with ỹ staffe she drowe alwaie ner & ner
And wende haue hit this Alein at full
And smote the Miller on the pilled skull
That doun he goth, and cried harrowe I die
These clerkes bete hym well, and let hym lie
And araieth hem, and tooke her hors anon
And eke her meale, and on her waie thei gon
And at the Mille doore thei tooke her cake
Of halfe a bushell floure, well ibake.

Thus is the proud Miller well ibete
And hath ilost the grindyng of the whete
And paied for the supper euery dele
Of Alein and of Jhon, that bete hym wele
His wife is swiued, and his doughter als
Lo loche it is a Miller to be fals
And therefore this prouerbe is full soth
Hym dare not well wene that iuell doth
A gilour shall hym self begiled be
And God that sitte in hie Maieste
Saue all this companie, great and smale
Thus haue I quite the Miller in his tale.

Here endeth the Reues tale, and here followeth the Cokes Prologe.

THE Coke of Lõdon while the Reue spake
For ioie he thoughthe clawde him on the bake
A ha (q he) for Christes passion
This Miller hath a sharp conclusion
Upon his argument of herbigage
Well saied Salamon in his langage
Ne bryng not euery man into thyn hous
For herbrowyng by night is perelous
Well ought a man auised for to be
Whom that he brought into his priuete
I praie to God so yeue me sorowe and care
If euer sithen I hight Hodge of Ware
Herd I Miller bette isette a werke
He had a iape of malice in the derke.

But God forbid that we stinten here
And therefore if ye vouchsafe to heare
A tale of me, that am a poore man
I woll tell you as well as I can
A litell iape, that fell in our citee

Our hoste saied, I graunt it thee
Now tell on Rodger, looke that it be good
For many a pastie hast thou letten blood
And many a Jacke of Douer hast thou sold
That hath been twise hotte and twise cold
Of many a pilgrim hast thou Christes curse
For of thy perse yet fare thei the worse
That thei haue eaten with thy stoble Goos
For in thy shoppe is many a Flie loos
Now tell on gentle Rogere by thy name
But yet I praie thee be not wrothe for game
A man maie saie ful soth in game and plaie.

Thou saiest full soth (q Roger) by my faie
But soth play, quade play, as ỹ Flemig saith
And therefore Henry Bailly by thy faith
Be thou not wroth, or we departen here
Though that my tale been of an hostelere
But nethelesse, I woll not tellen it yet
But er we part, iwis thou shalt be quit
And therewithall he lough and made chere
And saied his tale, as ye shullen after here.

Here endeth the Cokes Prologue, and here followeth his tale.

A Prentise whilom dwelte in our cite
And of the craft of Victailers was he
Galiarde he was, as goldfinche in the shawe
Broune as a berie, a proper short felawe
With lockes blacke, kemt full fetously
Daunce he couth full well and iolily
He was called Perkin Reuelour
He was as full of loue and paramour
As is the hiue full of honie swete
Well was the wenche with hym might mete
At euery Bridall would he sing and hoppe
He loued bette the Tauernes than the shoppe
For when any ridyng was in Chepe
Out of the shoppe thither would he lepe
Till that he had of all the sight isein
And daunced well, he would not come agein
And gather hym a meiny of his sort

To

The man of Lawes prologue.

To hope and syng, and make soche disport
And there thei sette Steuin for to mete
To plaien at the dice in soche a strete
For in the cite nas there no prentise
That fairer couth casten a paire of dise
Then Perkin couth, and therto he was fre
Of his dispence, in place of priuite
That found his maister well in his chafare
For oftymes he founde his bore full bare
For liberly, a prentise reuelour
That haunteth dise, riot, or paramour
His maister shall it in his shoppe abie
All haue he no part of the Minstralcie
For theft and riot, thei been conuertible
All can he plaie on Gettron or on Rebible
Reuell and truth, as in lowe degree
Thei been full wroth al daie, as men maie se
This iolie prentise, with his maister abode
Till he were nie out of his prentishode
All were he snibbed bothe early and late
And somtyme ledde with reuell to Newgate
But at the last, his maister him bethought
Upon a daie, whan he his paper sought
Of a prouerbe, that saieth this same worde
Well bette is rotten apple out of horde
Than that it rote all the remnaunt
So fareth it by a riotous seruaunt
It is moche lesse harme to let hym passe
Than he shend al the seruauntes in the place
Therfore his maister gaue hym a quitaunce
And bad him go, with sorowe and mischaũce
And thus this iolie prentise had his leue
Now let hym riot all the night or leue
And for there is no theke without a louke
That helpeth hym to waste or to souke
Of that he bribe can, or borowe maie
Anon he sent his bedde and his araie
Unto a compere of his owne sort
That loued dise, reuell and disport
And had a wife, that held for countenaunce
A shoppe, and swiued for her sustenaunce.

Here endeth the Cokes Tale,
and here followeth the man
of lawes Prologue.

OUR hoste sawe well, that the bright Sonne
The arke of his artificiall daie hath ronne
The fourth parte, and halfe an houre more
And though he were not depe expert in lore
He wiste it was the eightene daie
Of Aprill, that is the messanger to Maie
And sawe well, that the shadowe of euery tre
Was in length, the same quantite
As was the bodie erect, that caused it
And therefore by the shadowe he tooke his wit
That Phebus, whiche ỹ shone clere & bright
Degrees was fourtie clomben of hight
And for that daie, as in latitude
It was ten of the clocke, he gan conclude
And sodenly he plight his hors about.
Lordinges (quod he) I warne you all the rout
The fourth part of this daie is gon
Now for the loue of God and of sainct Jhon
Leseth no tyme, as ferforth as ye maie
Lordinges ỹ time wasteth bothe night & daie
And stealeth from vs, what priuely slepyng
And what throughe negligẽce, in our waking
As doth the streme, that turneth neuer again
Discendyng fro the mountain into the plain
Well can Seneke, and many a Philosofre
Bi wailen tyme, more than gold in cofre
For losse of cattell maie recouered be
But losse of tyme shendeth vs (quod he)
It would not come ayen withouten drede
No more than woll Malkins maiden hede
When she hath lost it in her wantonnesse
Let vs not mowlen thus in idelnesse.
Sir man of Lawe (quod he) so haue I blis
Till vs a tale anon, as forward is
Ye been submitted, throughe your fre assent
To stonden in this case at my iudgement
Acquiteth you now of your behest
Than haue you doen your deuer at the lest.
Hoste (quod he) de pardeux ieo assent
To breake forward is not myne entent
Biheste is dette, and I woll hold faine
All my behest, I can no better faine
For soch law as a mã yeueth an other wight
He should himself vsen it by right
Thus woll our text: but natheless certain
I can right now no thriftie tale faine
That Chaucer (though he can but leudly
On Metres and in rimyng craftely)
Hath saied hem, in soche Englisshe as he can
Of old tyme, as knoweth many a man
And if he haue not saied hem leue brother
In one booke, he hath saie hem in an other
For he hath told of louers vp and doun
Mo than Ouide made of mencion
In his Epistels, that been full old
What should I tellen hem, sithẽ thei ben told:
In youth he made of fire all alone
And sithen he hath spoken of euerichone
These noble wiues, and these louers eke
Who so that woll his large volume seke
Cleped the sainctes liues of Cupide

There

There maie he see the large woundes wide
Of Lucresse, and of Babilon Thisbe
The swerd of Dido for the false Enee
The tree of Phillis for her Demophoon
The plaint of Dieanire, and of Hermion
Of Ariadna, and of Hipsiphilee
The barain ile stondyng in the see
That dreint Liandre for Hero
The teares of Helein, and eke the wo
Of Briseis, and of Laodomia
The crueltie of Quene Media
The little children hongyng by the hals
For the Jason, that was of loue so fals
Of Hipermistra, Penelope, and Alceste
Your wifehod he commendeth with the beste
But certenly no worde ne writeth he
Of thilke wicked ensample of Canace
That loued her owne brother sinfullie
Of suche cursed stories I saie fie
Or els of Tyro Appoloneus
How that cursed kyng Antiocus
Biraft his doughter of her maidenhede
That is so horrible a tale for to rede
When he her drewe vpon the pament
And therefore he of full auisement
Nolde neuer write in non of his sermons
Of suche vnkinde abhominacions
Ne I ne woll non reherce, yef that I maie
But of my tale how shall I doen this daie
Me were lothe be likened doutles
To Mules, that men clepeth Piriades
Methamorphoseos wotte what I mene
But natheles I recche not a Bene
Though I come after hym with Haubake
I speake in prose, and let hym rimes make
And with that worde, he with a sober chere
Began his tale, as ye shullen after here.

Here endeth the man of Lawes Prologue, and here soloweth his tale.

Hatefull harme, condicio of pouert
With thirst, with cold, w hunger so confounded
To aske hem helpe, thee shameth in thyn hert
If thou non aske, w nede thou art so wounded
that very nede vnwrappeth al thy woūds hid
Maugrie thyn hed, thou must for indigence
Or stele, or begge, or borowe thy dispence.

Thou blamest Christ, and saiest ful bitterly
He mildepartteth richesse temporall
Thy neighbour thou witest sinfully
And saiest, thou hast to litell, and he hath all
Parfaie (saiest thou) sumtime he reken shall
Whan that his tale shall brenne in glede
For he nought helpeth nedefull in her nede.

Herken what is the sentence of the wise
Better is to dien, than to haue indigence
Thyn self neighbour woll thee dispise
If thou be poore, farwell thy reuerence
Yet of the wiseman take this sentence
All the daies, poore men been wicke
Beware therefore or thou cum to the pricke.

If thou be poore, thy brother hateth thee
And all thy friendes fleeth fro thee, alas
O riche marchauntes full of wele be ye
O noble prudent folke, as in this caas
Your bagges been not filde with ambes aas
But w cise sinke, ỹ renneth for your chaunce
At Christenmasse, merie maie ye daunce.

Ye seken londe and see for your winninges
As wise folke ye knowen all the state
Of reignes, ye been fathers of tidynges
And tales, bothe of peace and debate
I was right now of tales desolate
Here that a marchant, gone is many a yere
Me taught a tale, whiche ye shullen here.

In Surrey whilom dwelt a companie
Of Chapmen riche, and there to sadde and true
That wide where senten her spicerie
Clothes of golde, and Satten riche of hewe
Her chafare was so thriftie and so newe
That euery wight hath deintie to chafare
With hem, and eke to sellen hem her ware.

Now fell it, that the maisters of that sorte
Han shapen hem to Rome for to wende
Were it for chapmanhode, or for disporte
Non other messenger would thei thither sende
But comē hem self to Rome, this is the ende
And in suche place as thought hem auaūtage
For her entent, thei taken her herbigage.

Soiourned hā these marchantes in ỹ toun
Certain tyme, as fell to her pleasance
But so bifell, that the excellent renoune
Of the emperours doughter dame Custance
Reported was, with euery circumstaunce
Unto these Surrein marchātes, in suche wise
Fro daie to daie, as I shall you deuise,

This

The man of Lawes tale.

This was the comen voice of euery man
Our Emperour of Rome, God hym se
A doughter hath, that sithē the world began
To reken as well her goodnes as her beaute
Nas neuer soche an other as is she
I praie to God in honour her susteine
And would she were of al Europe the quene.

In her is hie beautie, without pride
Youth, without grenhed or folie
To al her worthes vertue is her guide
Humbles hath slain in her all tyrannie
She is a mirrour of all curtesie
Her hert is very chamber of holines
Her honde minister of fredome and almes.

And al this voice was soth, as God is true
But now to our purpose let vs tourne ayen
These marchātes han don fret her ships new
And whan thei han this blisful maiden seen
Home to Surrey been thei went agein
And doen her nedes, as thei han doen yore
And liuen in welth, I can saie no more.

Now fel it, ỹ these marchātes stoden in grace
Of hym that was the Soudan of Surrie
For whan ỹ thei came frō any straunge place
He would of his benigne curtesie
Haben hem good chere, and besilie aspie
Tidynges of sondrie realmes for to lere
The wonders that thei might seen or here.

Emong other thynges specially (sauce
These marchātes haue him told of dame Cu-
So greate noblesse, in ernest seriously
That this Soudā hath cauzt so great plesāce
To han her figure in his remembraunce
And all his lust, and all his besie cure
Was for to loue her, while his life maie dure.

Parauenture in that ilke large booke
Which that cleped is the heuen, iwriten was
With sterres, whan that he is birth tooke
That he for loue should han his death, alas
For in the sterres, clerer than nis the glas
Is written God wot, who so could it rede
The death of euery man withouten drede.

In sterres many a winter there bifore
Was writtē the death of Hector ♁ of Achilles
Of Pompei and Julius, or thei were bore
The strief of Thebes, and of Hercules
Of Sampson, Turnus, and of Socrates
The death: but that mens wittes been so dul
That no wight can well rede it at the full.

This Soudon for his priuie counsail sent
And shortly of this matter for to pace
He hath to hem declared all his entent
& said hem certain, but if he mizt haue grace
To haue Custance, within a litell space
He nas but dedde, and charged hem to hie
To shapen for his life some remedie.

Diuers men, diuersly thei saiden
The argument thei casten vp and doun
Many a subtell reason forth thei laiden
Thei speken of Magike, and abusioun
But finally, as in conclusioun
Thei can not seen in that non auauntage
Ne in non other waie, saue in mariage.

Then saw we thei therein soche difficulte
By waie of reason, to speake all plain
Bicause that there was soche diuersite
Bitwene her bothe lawes, that thei sain
Thei trowe that no christē prince would fain
Wedden his child vnder our lawes swete
That vs was tauzt, by Mahoūd our prophet.

And he answerd: rather than I lese
Custance, I would be christen doutles
I mote been hers, I maie non other chese
I praie you hold your argumentes in pees
Saueth my life, and be not recheles
To getten her, that hath my life in cure
For in this wo, I maie not long endure.

What nedeth greater delatacion
I saie, by treatie and ambassadzie
And by the Popes mediacion
And all the chirche, and all the cheualrie
That in destruction of Maumetrie
And in encrease of Christes lawe dere
Thei been accorded, as ye shall here.

How that the Soudan and his baronage
And all his lieges, should ichristened be
And he shall han Custance in mariage
And certain gold, I not what quantite
And her to finde sufficient surete
Thesame accord was sworne on either side
Now faire Custance, almightie god thee gide.

Now woulden sum men waiten, as I gesse
That I should tellen all the purueiance
That the Emperour of his noblesse
Hath shapen for his doughter dame Custance
Well maie men knowen, ỹ so great ordinance
Maie no man tellen in a litell clause
As was araied for so high a cause.

Bishoppes

Bishoppes ben shapen wt̄ her for to wende
Lordes and ladies, and knightes of renoune
And other folke ynowe this is the ende
And notified is throughout the toun
That euery wight, with great deuotioun
Shoulde pray Christ, that he this mariage
Receiue in gree, and spede this voiage.

The day is come of her departing
I say the wofull day natural is come
That ther may be no lenger tarying
But forwarde they hem dresse al and some
Custance, that with sorowe is all ouercome
Full pale arist, and dressed her to wende
For well she sey, there is none other ende.

Alas, what wondre is it though she wept:
That shal be sent to a straunge nation
Fro frendes, that so tenderly her kept
And to be bounden vnder subiection
Of one, she knoweth not his condicion
Husbondes ben all good and han ben yore
That knowen wiues, I dare say no more.

Father (she said) thy wretched childe Custāce
Thy yong daughter, fostred vp so softe
And ye my mother, my soueraigne pleasance
Ouer al thing (out take Christ on lofte)
Custaunce your childe her commaundeth oft
Unto your grace: for I shal to Surrye
Ne shal I neuer more se you with eye.

Alas, vnto the Barbary nation
I must anon, sithen it is your will
But Christ that starke for our redemption
So yeue me grace, his hestes to fulfill
I wretched woman no force though I spill
Women arn borne to thraldom and penaūce
And to ben vnder mannes gouernaunce.

I trow at Troy, whā Thurus brake ỹ wal
Of Ilyon, ne whan brent was Thebes cyte
Ne Rome for the harme of Hanybal
That Romans hath iuenquesshed times thre
Nas herd, such tendre weping for pite
As was in the chambre for her departing
But forth she mote, wheder she wepe or sing.

O first mouing cruel firmament
With thy diurnal swegh, that croudest aye
And hurtlest al fro Est to Occident
That naturally would hold another way
Thy crouding set the heuen in suche array
At the beginning of this feirs voiage
That cruel Mars hath slaine this mariage.

O infortunate assendent tortuous
Of which the lorde is helpelesse fal, alas
Out of his angle, into his derkest house
O Mars, O occisier, as in this caas
O feble Mone, vnhappy ben thy paas
Thou knittest ỹ there thou nart not receiued
Ther thou were wel, fro thence art ỹ waiued.

Imprudent Emperour of Rome, alas
Was there no philosofer in thy toun:
Is no time bette than other in suche cas:
Of voiage, is there non electioun:
Namely to folke of hie condicioun
Nat whan a rote is of a birthe iknowe
Alas we ben to leude, or to slowe.

To ship is brought this wofull faire mayd
Solempnely, with euery circumstaunce
Now Jesus Christ be with you all (she sayd)
Ther nis no more, but farewel faire Custāce
She paineth her to make good countenance
And forthe I let her sayle in this manere
And tourne I woll againe to my matere.

Explicit prima pars: & sequi-
tur pars secunda.

The mother of the Soudon, wel of vices
Aspied hath her sonnes playn entent
Howe he wol lete his olde sacrifices
And right anon, she for her counsaile sent
And they ben comen, to know what she ment
And whan assembled was this folke in fere
She set her doun, and said, as ye shal here.

Lordes (q̄ she) ye knowen euerychone
Howe that my sonne is in point to lete
The holy lawes of our Alharon
Yeuen by goddes messenger Machomete
But one auowe to grete god I hete
The life shal rather out of my body stert
Or Machomettes lawe go out of my herte.

What should vs tiden of this newe lawe
But thraldome to our bodies and penaunce
And afterwarde in hel to ben drawe
For we reneyed Mahounde our creaunce:
But lordes, wol ye make assuraunce
As I shal say, assenting to my lore
And I shall make vs safe for euermore.

They sworen, and assenten euery man

To liue with her and dye, and by her stonde
And eueriche in the best wise that he can
To strengthen her, shall his frendes fonde
And she hath this empryse take in honde
Whiche ye shall here, that I shall deuise
And to hem all she spake in this wise.

We shul vs first faine, christendome to take
Cold water shall not greue vs but a lite
And I shall sothe a reuell and a feast make
That as I trowe, I shall the Soudon quite
For tho his wife be christened neuer so white
She shall haue nede to washe awaie the rede
Though she a font ful of water with her lede

O Soudonnesse, roote of iniquite
Virago, thou Symyram the second
O serpent vnder femeninete
Like to the serpent depe in hell ibound
O fained woman, all that maie confound
Vertue and innocence, thrugh thy malice
Is bredde in thee, a nest of euery vice.

O Sathan enuious, sin thilke daie
That thou were chased from our heritage
Well knewest thou to women the old waie
Thou maidest Eue to bring vs in seruage
Thou wolt fordoen this christen mariage
This instrument, so wela waie the while
Makest thou of women, whan ỹ wolt begile

This Soudonnesse, whō I blame & werie
Let priuely her counsaile gon her waie
What should I in this tale lenger tarie?
She rideth to the Soudon on a daie
And saied hym, that she would reny her laie
And christendome of priestes hondes fong
Repentyng her, she Hethen was so long.

Beseechyng hym, to doen her that honour
That she might haue the christen folke to fest
To plesen hem, I woll doen my labour
The Soudon saieth, I woll doen at you hest
And knelyng, thanked her of that request
So glad he was, he nist not what to saie
She kist her sonne, & home she goth her waie

Arriued been these christen folke to lond
In Surre, with a great solempne route
And hastely this Soudon sent his sond
First to his mother, and all the reigne about
And saied, his wife was comen out of dout
And praiden hem for to riden against ỹ quene
The honour of his reigne for to sustene.

Great was the prese, and riche was ỹ raie
Of Surreyens, and Romaines imette ifere
The mother of the Soudon, riche and gaie
Receiueth her with all glad chere
As any mother might her doughter dere
Unto the next cite there beside
I soft paas solempnely thei ride.

Nought trowe I, the triumphe of Julius
Of whiche that Lucan maketh soche a boste
Was roialler, and more curious
Than was thassemblyng of his blisfull hoste
But this Scorpion, this wicked goste
The Soudonnesse, for all her flatteryng
Cast vnder all this, full mortally to styng.

The Soudō cometh himself sone after this
So rially, that wonder is to tell
Ye welcometh her with moche soie and blis
And thus in mirthe and soie I let hem dwell
The fruict of euery tale is for to tell
Whan time come, men thought it for the best
That reuell stint, and men gon to rest.

The tyme come, this old Soudonnesse
Ordained hath the feast, of whiche I told
And to the feast, christen folke hem dresse
In generall, bothe yong and old
There maie men feast and rialte behold
And deintes mo than I can deuise
But all to dere thei boughten it or thei rise.

O Soudon, wo ỹ euer thou art successour
To worldly blisse, springed with bitternesse
The ende of ioie, of our worldly labour
Wo occupieth the ende of our gladnesse
Herken this counsaile, for thy sikernesse
Upon thy glad daie haue thou in mynde
The vnware wo or harm, ỹ cometh behinde.

For shortly to tellen at a worde
The Soudon, and the christen euerichone
Been all to hewe, and sticked at the borde
But it were onely dame Custance alone
This old Soudonnesse, curled crone
Hath with her frendes doen this cursed dede
For she her self would all the countrelede

Ne there was Surreien non ỹ was cōuerted
That of the counsaile of the Soudon wot
That he nas all to hewe, er he asterted
And Custance han thei taken anon forthot
And in a shippe all sterneles (God wot)
Thei han her set, and bidden her lerne to saile
Out of Surrey ayenward to Itale.

A certayn tresour, that she thider ladde
And soth to sayne, vitaile great plente
They han her yeuen, and clothes eke she had
And forth she saileth in the salte se
O my Custaunce, ful of benignite
O Emperours yong doughter dere
He that is lords of fortune, be thy stere.

Who hath the four spirites of the tempeste
That power had, bothe to anoye londe & see
Bothe north and soute, and also west & este
Anoyeth neyther see, ne londe, ne tre
Sothly the commaunder therof was he
That fro the tempest aye this woman kepte
As wel whan she woke as whan she slepte

She blesseth her, & with full pitous voice
Unto the crosse of Christ, thus said she.
O clere, o welful auter, holy croice
Reed of the laumbes blood, ful of pite
That wesshe the world fro the olde iniquite
Me fro the fende, and fro his clawe kepe
That day that I shal drenchen in the depe.

Wher might this womã mete & drinke haue?
Thre yere and more, how lasteth her vitaile?
Who fed the Egipcian Mary in the caue
Or in desert (none but Christ sans faile)
Fiue thousãd folke it was as great maruaile
With loues fiue and fisches two to fede
God sent his foyson at her great nede.

Victorious tree, proteccion of trewe
That onely worthy were for to bere
The king of heuen, with his woundes newe
The whit laumbe, that hurt was with a spere
Flemere of feendes, out of him and here
On whiche thy limmes, faithfully extenden
Me kepe, & yeue me might my life to amẽden

She driueth forth into our Occian
Throughout the wilde see, till at the last
Under han holde, that nempne I ne can
Fer in Northumberlond, the wawe her cast
And in the sande her shippe sticked so fast
That thence nolne it not of all a tide
The wil of Christ was ỹ she should ther abide.

yeres and daies fleteth this creature
Throughout the see of Grece, vnto the straite
Of Maroche, as it was her auenture
O, many a sory meale may she baite
After her deth ful oft may she waite
Or that the wilde waues would her driue
Unto the place there she should ariue.

The constable of the castel doun is fare
To sene this wrecke, & al the ship he sought
And found this wery woman full of care
He founde also the tresoure that she brought
In her langage, mercy she besought
The life of her body for to twin
Her to deliuer of wo that she was in.

Men mightẽ asken, why she was not slayn
Eke at the feest, who might her body saue?
I answere to that demaunde agayn
Who saued Daniel in that horrible caue?
Ther euery wight, wer he maister or knaue
Was with the Lion frette or he asterte
No wight but God, that he bare in his hert.

A maner latin corrupte was her speche
But algates therby was she vnderstonde
The constable, whan him list no lenger seche
This wofull woman brought he to londe
She kneleth doun, and thanketh gods sonde
But what she was, she would no man sey
For soule ne sayne, though she should dey.

God list to shewe his wonderful miracle
In her for she should sene his mighty werkes
Crist that is to euery harme triacle
By certain meanes often, as knowen clerkes
Doth thing for certayn ende, ỹ full derke is
To mans witte, that for our ignorance
Ne can nat know his prudent purueyaunce.

She was so diligent withouten slouth
To serue and plese eueriche in that place
That al her louen, that loken in her face.

Now sith ỹ she was not at ỹ feest yslawe
Who kepeth her fro the drenching in the see?
Who kept Jonas in the fisches mawe
Til he was spouted out at Niniue?
Wel may men know, it was no wigh but he
That kept the people Ebrak from drenching
With drie fete, through the see passing

The cõstable, & dame Hermegilde his wife
Were painems, and that contre euery where
But Hermegilde loued her right as her life
And Custaunce hath so long soiourned there
In orisons, with many a bitter tere
Til Jesu hath conuerted through his grace
Dame Hermegilde, cõstablesse of that place.

The man of Lawes tale.

In all that londe durst no christen route
All christen folke been fled from the countre
Through painims, that conquered all about
The plagues of the North, by londe and see
To Wales fledde the christianite
Of old Bretons, dwelling in that Ile
There was her refute, for the meane while.

But yet nas ther neuer christē Bretō so exiled
That there nas some in her priuete
Honoured Christ, and Hethen folke begiled
And nie the castell seche there dwellen thre
That one of hem was blind, & might not se
But it were with thilke yen of his mynde
With whiche men seen, after thei been blind.

Bright was the Sōne, as in Somers daie
For whiche the conestable, and his wife also
And Custance, han taken the right waie
Toward the sea, a furlong waie or two
To plaien, and to romen to and fro
And in her walke, thre blinde men thei met
Croked and old, with yen fast ishet.

In the name of Christ, cried this blind Bretō
Dame Hermegilde, yeue me sight again
This lady ware a frai ed of the soun
Lest that her husbonde, shortly for to sain
Would her for Jesus Christes lore haue slain
Til Custance made her bold, & bad her werche
The will of Christ, as doughter of his cherch

The conestable wore abashed of that sight
And saied: what amounteth all this fare?
Custance answerd: sir it is Christes might
That helpeth folke out of the fendes snare
And so ferforth she gan our lawe declare
That she the conestable, er that it was eue
Cōuerted hath, & on Christ made him bileue.

This Cōstable was nothing lord of this place
Of whiche I speake, there he Custance fonde
But kept it strongly, many a Winter space
Under Alla, kyng of Northumberlonde
That was full wise, and worthy of his hond
Again the Scottes, as men maie well here
But tourne I woll again to my matere.

Sathan, that euer vs waiteth to begile
Sawe of Custance all her perfeccioun
And cast anon how he might quite her wile
And made a yong knight, ỹ dwelt in the toun
Loue her so hot, of foule affeccion
That verely, him thought that he should spil
But he of her ones might haue his will.

He woeth her, but it auailed nought
She would doe no synne by no weie
And for dispite, he compassed in his thought
To maken her on shamfull death to deie
He waiteth whan the Conestable is awaie
And priuely on a night he crept
In to Hermegildes chamber while she slept.

Werie forwaked in her orisons
Slepeth Custance and Hermegilde also
This knight, through Sathans temptaciōs
All softly is to the bedde igo
And cut the throte of Hermegilde a two
And laied the blody knife by dame Custance
And wēt his waie, ther god yeue hi mischāce

Sone after cometh the cōstable home again
And eke Alla, that kyng was of that londe
And sawe his wife dispitously islain
For whiche he wept and wrong his honde
And in the bedde the bloody knife he fonde
By dame Custance, alas what might she say?
For very wo, her witte was all awaie.

To kyng Alla was told all this mischance
And eke ỹ time, and where, and in what wise
That in a shippe was founden this Custance
As here before ye han heard me deuise
The kynges hart, for pite gan agrise
Whan he sawe so benigne a creature
Fall in disease and in misaduenture.

For as the lābe toward his death is brought
So stant this innocent before the kyng
This fals knight, ỹ hath this treſō wrought
Bereth her in hond, ỹ she hath don this thing
But natheless there was great murmyng
Emong the people, and said thei can not gesse
That she had doen so greate a wickednesse.

For thei han seen her euer so vertuous
And louyng Hermegile, right as her life
Of this bare witnesse eueriche in the hous
Saue he that Hermegile slow with his knife
This gētle kyng hath caught a great motife
Of this witnes, & thought he would enquire
Deper in this case, the trouth to lere.

Alas Custance, thou hast no champion
Ne fight canst thou not, so wela waie
But he that starfte for our redempcion
And bond Sathan, and yet lith there he laie
So be thy strong champion this daie
For but if Christ on the miracle kithe
Without gilt thou shalt been slain al swithe.

She

She set her doun on knees, & thus she said
Immortall God, that sauedest Susanne
Fro fals blame, and thou mercifull maide
Marie I meane, doughter to sainct Anne
Biforne whose childe angels syng Osanne
If I be giltlesse of this felonie
My socour be, or els shall I die.

Haue ye not seen sometyme a pale face
(Emong a prees) of hem that hath been lad
Toward his deth, wher as hem get no grace
And soche a colour in his face hath had
That mē might knowe his face ꝑ was bistad
Emonges all the faces in that rout
So standeth Custance, and loketh her about

O Quenes liuyng in prosperite
Duchesses, and ye ladies euerichone
Haue some routhe on her aduersite
An Emperours doughter stant alone
She hath no wist, to whō to make her mone
O blood roiall, that stondeth in this drede
Ferre been thy frendes at thy greate nede.

This Alla kyng, hath soche compassioun
As gentle hart is full of pite
That fro his yen ran the water doun.
Now hastely doe fet a booke (quod he)
And if this knight woll swere, how that she
This woman slowe, yet woll we vs auise
Whom that we woll shall been our iustice

A Breton boke, written with Euangeles
Was set, and thereon he swore anone
She giltie was, and in the meane whiles
An honde hym smote on the necke bone
That doune he fill atones, as a stone
And bothe his yen brast out of his face
In sight of euery body in that place.

A voice was heard, in generall audience
That saied: Thou hast disclandred giltles
The doughter of holy chirche, in hie presence
Thus hast thou doen, and yet I hold my pees
Of this marueile, agast was all the prees
As dismaide folke, thei stonden euerichone
For drede of wreche, saue Custance alone.

Great was the drede, & eke the repentance
Of hem that hadden wrought suspeccion
Upon this sely innocent Custance
And for this miracle, in conclusion
And by Custances mediacion
The kyng, and many an other in that place
Conuerted was, thanked be goddes grace.

This fals knight, was slain for his untroth
By iudgement of Alla hastely
And yet Custance had of his death great roth
And after this, Jesus of his mercie
Made Alla wedden full solempnely
This holy maide, that is so bright and shene
And thus hath christ made Custance a quene

But who was wofull, if I should not lye
Of this weddyng: but Donegelde and no mo
The kynges mother, full of tyrannie
Her thought her cursed hart brast a two
She would not her soonne had doe so
Her thought a dispite, that he should take
So straunge a creature vnto his make.

Me list not of the chaffe ne of the stree
Make so long a tale, as of the corne
What should I tell of the realte
Of ꝑ mariage, or whiche course goth beforne
Who bloweth in a trompe or in an horne
The fruict of euery tale is for to saie
Thei eaten and drinken, daunce and plaie.

Thei gon to bed, as it was skill and right
For though that wiues ben full holy thinges
Thei must take in pacience a night
Soche maner necessaries, as ben pleasynges
To folke that han wedded hem with ringes
And laie a litell her holinesse aside
As for the tyme, it maie none other betide.

On her he gatte a man child anone
And to a bishop, and to his conestable eke
He toke his wife to kepe, whan he is gon
To Scotlande ward, his somen for to seke
Now faire Custāce, ꝑ is so humble and meke
So long is gon with child till that still
She halt her chamber, abiding Christes wil

The time is come, a man child she bare
Mauricius at fontstone thei hym call
This constable doth forthy come a messanger
And wrote to his king that cleped was Alla
How that this blisfull tidyng is befall
And other tidynges nedefull for to saie
He taketh the letter, & forth he goth his waie

This messanger to doen his auauntage
Unto the kynges mother rideth swithe
And salueth her full faire in his language
Madame (quod he) ye maie be glad and blithe
And thanked God an hundred thousand sith
My lady quene hath child, withouten dout
To ioie and blisse of all this reigne about.

The man of Lawes tale.

Lo here the letters sealed of this thing
That I mote beare, in all the haste I maie
Yeue ye woll ought vnto your sonne the king
I am your seruaunt bothe night and daie
Donegilde answerde, as at this tyme naie
But here I woll all night thou take thy rest
To morowe woll I saie thee what my lest.

This messanger dronke sadly both ale & wine
And stollen were his letters priuely
Out of his boxe, while he slept as a swine
And counterfected was full subtelly
An other letter, wrough full synfully
Unto the kyng directe of this mattere
Fro his Constable, as ye shal after here.

The letter spake, the quene deliuered was
Of so horrible a fendlisshe creature
That in the castell non so hardy was
That any while durst therein endure
The mother was an Elfe by auenture
Icome, by charmes or by sorcerie
And euery wight hateth her companie.

Wo was this king, whā he the letter had sein
But to no wight he told his sorowe sore
But with his owne hand he wrote agein
Welcome the sonde of Christ for euermore
To me, that am newe learned in his lore
Lorde, welcome be thy lust and thy plesance
My lust I put all in thyne ordinaunce.

Kepeth this child, all be it foule or faire
And eke my wife, vnto my home commyng
Christ whan hym lest, maie send me an heire
More agreable than this, to my likyng
This letter he sealed, priuely wepyng
Whiche to the messanger was taken sone
And forth he goth there is no more to doen.

O messanger fulfilled of dronkennesse
Strong is thy breth, thy limmes faltren aie
And thou bewraiest all secretnesse
Thy mynde is lorne, thou iangliest as a Jaie
Thy face is tourned in a newe araie
There dronkennesse reigneth in any rout
There nis no counsaile hid withouten dout.

O Donegild, I ne haue non English digne
Unto thy malice, and thy tirannie
And therefore to the fende I thee resigne
Let hym endite of thy traitrie
Fie mannisshe fie: O naie by God I lie
Fie fendisshe spirit for I dare wel tell
Though thou here walke, thy spirit is in hel.

This messanger cometh fro the king again
And at the kynges mothers hous he light
And she was of this messanger full fain
And pleased hym in all that euer she might
He dronke, and well his girdell vnder pight
He slepeth, and he snoreth in his gise
All night, till the Sonne gan arise.

Eft were his letters stollen euerichon
And counterfected letters in this wise
The king commaundeth his constable anon
Upon pain of hangyng on an hie iewise
That he ne should suffren in no wise
Custance, within his realme for to abide
Three daies, and quarter of a tide.

But in thesame shippe, as he her fonde
Her and her yong soonne, and all her gere
He should croude, and put fro the londe
And charge her, that she neuer eft come there
O Custance, well maie thy ghost haue fere
And slepyng in thy dreame, been in penance
When Donegilde, cast all this ordinance.

This messanger on the morow whā he woke
Unto the castell halt the next waie
And to the Constable he the letter tooke
And whan that he this pitous letter seie
Full oft he saied (alas) and weiawaie
Lord christ (q he) how may this world endure
So full of synne is many a creature.

O mightie God, if that it be thy will
Sin thou art rightful iudge, how may it bee
That thou wolt suffer innocence to spill:
And wicked folke to reigne in prosperite
O, good Custance (alas) so wo is me
That I mote be thy turmentour, or eis deie
On shames death, there nis non other weie.

Wepen bothe yong and old in that place
When that the kyng this cursed letter sent
And Custance with a dedly pale face
The fourth daie, toward her shippe she went
But natheless, she taketh in good entent
The wil of Christ, and kneling in that strōde
She saied lorde, aie welcome be thy sonde.

He that me kept fro that false blame
Whiles I was on the londe emonges you
He can me kepe fro harme, and eke fro shame
In the salt sea, although I se not how
As strong as euer he was, he is now
In hym trust I, and in his mother dere
That is to me, my saille and eke my stere.

Per

Her litel chylde lay weping in her arme
And kneling petously, to him she saide
Peace litell sonne, I wol do the none harme
With that her kercher of her hed she braide
And ouer his litell eyen she it laide
And in her arme, she lulleth it full faste
And into heauen her eyen vp she caste.

Mother (q̄ she) and mayde bright Mary
Sothe is, that through womans eggement
Mankinde was lore, & dampned aye to dye
For whiche thy childe was on crosse yrent
Thy blisfull eyen sawe all his turment
Than is there no comparison betwene
Thy wo, and any wo that man may sustene

Thou se thy child yslaine before thyn eyen
And yet nowe liueth my litell childe parfay
Now lady bright, to whom al wofull cryen
Thou glory of womanheed, thou fayre may
Thou hauen of refute, bright sterre of day
Rewe on my childe, of thy gentelnesse
That rewest on euery rufull in distresse

O litell childe (alas) what is thy gilte?
That neuer wroughtest sinne, as yet parde
Why wol thyn harde father haue the spilte?
O mercy: dere constable (q̄ she)
As let my litle childe dwell here with the
And if thou darst not sauen him fro blame
So kisse him ones, in his fathers name

Therwith she loketh backwarde to ỹ londe
And said: farewell husbande routhlesse
And vp she rist, & walketh doune the stronde
Towarde the shippe her followeth al the prees
& euer she praieth her child to holde hys pees
And taketh her leue, and with an holy entent
She blesseth her, and into the shippe she went

Victayled was the shippe, it is no drede
Habundantly, for her a full longe space
And other necessaries that should nede
She had inowe, hereid by goddes grace
For wind & wedder, almighty God purchace
And bring her home, I can no better say
But in the see, she driueth forth her way

Alla the king cometh home sone after this
Unto his castell, of whiche I tolde
And asketh were his wife and his childe is
The constable gan about his hert to colde
And playnly al the maner him tolde
As ye han herde, I can tell it no better
And shewed the king his seale and his letter

And said: lorde as ye commaunded me
Upon paine of death, so haue I done certayn
This messanger tormented was, till he
Must beknowen, and tell plat and playn
Fro night to night, in what place he had layn
And thus by witte subtell enquiring (spring
Ymagined was, by whome this harme gan

The hand was knowen, ỹ the letter wrote
And all the venim of this cursed dede
But in what wise, certainely I note
The effecte is this, that Alla out of drede
His mother slow, that may men plainly rede
For that she traytour was to her alegaunce
Thus endeth olde Donegilde, w̄ mischaunce.

The sorow that this Alla night and day
Maketh for his childe, and for his wife also
There is no tonge that it tel may
But nowe woll I to Custaunce go
That fleteth in the see, in paine and wo
Fyue yere and more, as liked Christes sonde
Or that her shippe approched vnto londe

Under an hethen castell, at the last
Of whiche the name in my text I not finde
Custaunce and eke her childe the see vp cast
Almighty god, that saueth al mankinde
Haue on Custaūce, & on her child some minde
That fallen is in hethen hond efte sone
In point to spill, as I shall tell you sone

Doun fro ỹ castel cometh ther many a wight
To gauren on this shippe, and on Custaunce
But shortly fro the castell on a night
The lordes stewarde god yeue him mischaūce
A theefe, that had renied our creaunce
Came into the shippe alone, & said he shoulde
Her lemman be, whether she would or nolde

Wo was the wrtched woman tho bygon
Her child, and she cried pittously
But blisful Mary halpe her anon
For with her strogling, wel and mightily
The theefe fel ouer the borde, all sodaynly
And in the see he drenched for vengeaunce
And thus hath Christ vnwēmed kept custāce

O foule lust of luxure, lo thine ende
Nat onely that thou faintest mans minde
But verely, thou wolt his body shende
The ende of thy werke, or of thy lustes blinde
Is cōplaining: how many one may men find
That not for werke somtime, but for thētent
To don this sinne, bene either slaine or shent

How maie this weke woman haue ẏ strẽgth
Her to defende againſt this renegate?
O Golias, vnmeaſurable of length
How might Dauid make thee ſo mate?
So yong, and of armure ſo deſolate
How durſt he looke on thy dredfull face?
Well maie men ſeen, it is but Goddes grace.

Who yaue Judith courage or hardineſſe
To ſlean hym Holofernes in his tent
And to deliuer out of wretchednesſe
The people of God? I ſaie, for this entent
That right as God, ſpirit and vigore ſent
To hem, and ſaued hem out of miſchance
So ſent he might and vigor to Cuſtance.

Forth goth her ſhip through ẏ narow mouth
Of Subalter and ſept, fletyng aie
Somtyme weſte, & ſomtime North & South
And ſometyme Eaſt, full many a werie daie
Till Chriſtes mother, iblefſed be ſhe aie
Hath ſhapen, through her endleſſe goodneſſe.
To make an ende of all her heuineſſe.

Explicit ſecunda pars, &
ſequitur pars tertia.

NOw let vs ſtint of Cuſtãce
but a throwe
And ſpeake we of the Ro-
maine Emperour
That out of Surrey hath
by letters knowe
The ſlaughter of Chriſten
folke, and diſhonour
Doen to his doughter, by a fals traitour
I meane the curſed wicked Soudonneſſe
That at the feaſt, let ſlean bothe more & leſſe.

For which this Emperour hath ſent anon
His ſenatour, with roiall ordinaunce
And other lordes, God wote many one
On Surreiens to doen hie vengeaunce.
Thei brẽnen, ſlean, & bringen hẽ to miſchãce
Full many a daie: but ſhortly this is the ende
Homward to Rome, thei ſhapen hem to wẽd.

This ſenatour repaireth with victorie
To Rome ward, ſailyng full roially
And met the ſhip driuyng, as faith the ſtorie
In whiche Cuſtance, ſat full petouſly
Nothyng knewe he what ſhe was, ne why
She was in ſoche araie, ne ſhe nolde ſeie
Of her eſtate, though ſhe ſhould deie.

He bringeth her to Rome, and to his wife
He yaue her, and her yonge ſonne alſo
And with the ſenatour ſhe ladde her life
Thus can our lady bring out of wo
Wofull Cuſtaunce, and many an other mo
And longe time dwelled ſhe in that place
In holy werkes euer, as was her grace.

The ſenatours wife her aunte was
But for al that, ſhe knew her neuer the more
I woll no lenger tary in this caas
But to king Alla, the whiche I ſpake of yore
That for his wife wepeth, and liketh ſore
I wol retourne, and let I will Cuſtaunce
Under the ſenatours gouernaunce.

King Alla, which ẏ had his mother ſlayn
Upon a day fell in ſuche repentaunce
That if I ſhortly tellen al ſhal, and playn
To Rome he cometh, to receiue his penaunce
And putten him in the popes ordinaunce
In hye & in lowe, and Jeſu Chriſt be ſought
Forgeue his wicked werkes, that he wrought

The fame anon through Rome town is born
How Alla king, ſhal come on pilgrimage
By herbegers that wenten him beforn
For whiche the ſenatour, as was vſage
Rode him againe, and many of his linage
As well to ſhewen his hye magnificence
As to done any king reuerence

Great chere doth this noble ſenatour
To king Alla, and he to him alſo
Eueriche of hem doth other great honour
And ſo befell, that on a day or two
This ſenatour is to king Alla go
To feſte, and ſhortly if I ſhall not lye
Cuſtaunces ſonne went in his companye

Sum mẽ wold ſayn, at ẏ requeſt of cuſtãce
This ſenatour had ladde this childe to feſt
I may not tellen euery circumſtaunce
Be as be may, there was he at leſt
But ſoth it is, right at his mothers heſt
Byfore Alla, during the meate ſpace
The childe ſtode, loking in the kinges face.

This Alla kig, hath of this child gret wõder
And to the ſenatour he ſaid anon
Whoſe is ẏ fayre child, that ſtondeth yonder?
I not (q he) by god and by ſainte John
A mother he hath, but father hath he non
That I of wote, but ſhortly in a ſtound
He tolde Alla, how the childe was found.

But

But God wote (q̄ the Senatour also)
So vertuous a liuer in my life
Ne sawe I neuer, as he, ne heard of no
Of worldly woman, maiden, ne of wife
I dare well saie, she had leuer a knife
Through her brest, than been a womā wiche
There is no man couth bring her to the prich

Now was the child as like Custance
As possible is, a creature for to be
This Alla hath the face in remembraunce
Of dame Custance, and theron mused he
yeue that the childes mother were aught she
That is his wife, and priuely he light
And spedde hym fro the table, that he might.

Parfai he thought, ỹ fatome is in min hed
I ought deme of skilfull iudgement
That in the salt sea my wife is ded
And after ward he made his argument
what wote I, if Christ hath hither sent
My wife by sea: as well as he her sent
To my contry, fro thens that she was went.

And after anon, hom with the Senatour
Goth Alla, for to see this wonder chaunce
This Senatour doeth Alla great honour
And hastely he sent after Custaunce
But trusteth well, her lust not to daunce
when she wiste wherefore was that sonde
Unneth vpon her feete might she stonde.

when Alla sawe his wife faire he her gret
And wept, that it was routh to for see
For at the first looke he on her set
He knewe well verely, that it was she
And for sorowe, as dombe stant as a tree
So was her hart shet in distresse
whan she remembred his vnkindnesse.

Twise she souned in his owne sight
He wepeth and hem excuseth petously
Now God (q̄ he) and his hallowes bright
So wisly on my soule haue mercie
That of your harme, as giltlesse am I
As is Mauris my sonne, so like your face
Els the sende me fetche out of this place.

Lōg was the sobbyng, and the bitter pain
Or that her wofull hart might cease
Great was the pite to heare hem complain
Through which plaintes gā her wo encrese
I praie you all my labour to release
I maie not tell her wo, till to morow
I am so werie to speake of her sorow.

But finally, whan the sothe is wiste
That Alla giltlesse was of her wo
I trowe an hundred tymes been thei kiste
And sothe a blesse is there betwixt hem two
That saue the ioie, that lasteth euermo
There is no like, that any creature
Hath sein or shal, while the world maie dure

Tho praied she her husbonde mekely
In releasyng of her petous paine
That he would praie her father specially
That of his Maiestie he would encline
To vouchsafe some daie with hym to dine
She praied hym eke, he should be no waie
Unto her father no worde of her to saie.

Sum men would saie, ỹ the child Maurice
Doeth this message vntill this Emperour
But as I gesse, Alla was not so nice
To hym that was of so soueraigne honour
As he that is of christen folke the flour
Sent any child, but it is bette to deme
He went hymself, and so it maie well seme.

This Emperour graunted gentelly
To come to diner, as he hym besought
That all was redy he loked belily
Upon this child, & on his doughter thought
Alla goeth to his inne, and as he him ought
Arraied for this feast in euery wise
As ferforth as his conning maie suffice

The morow came, and Alla gan him dresse
And eke his wife, the Emperour for to mete
And forth thei ride in ioie and in gladnesse
And whan she sawe her father in the strete
She light doune and falleth him to fete
Father (q̄ she) your yong child Custance
Is now full clene out of your remembrance.

I am your doughter Custance (q̄ she)
That whilom ye han sent into Surrie
It am I father, that in the salt see
Was put alone, and dampned for to die
Now good father I you mercie crie
Sende me no more into Heathennesse
But thanken my lorde here of his kindnesse.

who can the pitous ioie tellen all
Betwixt hem three? sin thei been thus imette
But of my tale make an ende I shall
The daie goeth fast, I woll no lenger lette
This glad folke to dinner been sette
In ioie and blisse, at meate I let hem dwell
A thousande folde well more than I can tell

This

The Squiers tale.

This child Mauris was sithen Emperour
Made by the Pope, and liued chrystenly
To Chrystes churche he did greate honour
But I lette all this storie passen by
Of Custance is my tale specially
In old Romain iestes men maie finde
Mauris life, I beare it not in mynde.

This king Alla, when his tyme seie
With this Custance, his holy wife so swete
To Englonde been thei come the right weie
Where as thei liue in ioie and in quiete
But litell while it lasteth I you hete
Ioie of this worlde, for tyme woll not abide
Fro daie to night, it chaungeth as the tide.

Who liued euer in soche delite a daie
That he ne meued either in conscience
Or ire, or talent of some kin affraie
Enuie or pride, or passion, or offence?
I ne saie, but for this ende, and this sentence
That litell while in ioie or in plesance
Lasteth the blisse of Alla with Custance.

For death, that taketh of hie & low his rēte
When passed was a yere, euin as I gesse
Out of this worlde kyng Alla hente
For whō Custance hath full greate heuinesse
Now let vs praien God his soule blesse
And dame Custance, finally to saie
Toward the toune of Rome goth her waie.

To Rome is come this holy creature
And findeth her father hole and sounde
Now is she shaped all her auenture
And when that she her father hath ifounde
Doune on her knees she goeth to ground
Wepyng for tenderneſſe in her hart blithe
She herieth God, an hundred thousand sithe

In vertue and holy almesdede
Thei liuen all, and neuer a sonder wende
Till death departen hem, this life thei lede
And fareth now well, my tale is at an ende
Now Jesu Chryst, ỹ of his might maie sende
Ioie after wo, gouerne vs in his grace
And kepe vs all, that been in this place.

Thus endeth the man
of Lawes Tale.

Here followeth the
Squiers Pro-
logue.

Our hoste on his stirops stoode anon
And said: good men herkeneth euerichon
This was a thriftie tale for the nones
Sir parishe priest (q he) for Goddes bones
Tell vs a tale, as was thy forward yore
I see well that ye learned men in lore
Can moche good, by Goddes dignite.

The Parson him answerde, benedicite
What eileth the man, so sinfully to swere?
Our hoste answerd, O Jenkin, be ye there
Now good men (q our hoste) herkeneth to me
I smell a loller in the winde (q he)
Abideth for Goddes digne passion
For we shall haue a predicacion
This loller here, woll prechen vs somwhat.
Naie by my fathers soule, that shall he nat
Saied the Squier, here shall he nat preache
Here shall he no Gospell Glose ne teache
We leueth all in the great God (q he)
He would sowen some difficulte
Or sping cockell in our cleane corne
And therefore hoste, I warne thee beforne
My ioly bodie, shall a tale tell
And I shall ringen you so merie a bell
That I shall waken all this companie
But it shall not been of Philosofie
Ne Philisike, ne termes queinte of lawe
There is but litell Laten in my mawe

Here endeth the Squiers
Prologue, and here after
followeth his tale.

At Sarra, in the londe of Tartarie
There dwelt a kyng that warred Surreie
Through which ther died many a doughtie man
This noble king was called Cambuscan
Whiche in his tyme was of so great renoun
That there nas no where, in no region
So excellent a lorde in all thyng
Hym lacked nought, that longeth to a kyng
As of the secte of whiche he was borne
He kept his laie to whiche he was sworne
And thereto he was hardie, wise, and riche
And pitous and iuste alwaie iliche
True of his worde, benigne and honourable
Of his corage, as any centre stable
Yong, freshe, and strong, in armes desirous

As

Is any bacheler of all his hous
A faire persone he was, and fortunate
And kept alwaie so roiall astate
That there nas no where soche an other mā.
This noble king, this Tartre, this Cābuscā
Had two soonnes by Eltheta his wife
Of whiche the eldest hight Algarsife
That other was cleped Camballo.
A doughter had this worthie kyng also
That yongest was, and hight Canace
But for to tell you all her beaute
It lithe not in my tong, ne in my connyng
I dare not vndertake so hie a thyng
Myn Englishe eke is vnsufficient
It must been a Rethor excellent
That couth his colours, longyng for the art
If he shoud discriue here euery part
I am none soche, I mote speake as I can
And so bifell, that this Cambuscan
Hath twentie winter borne his diademe
As he was wont, fro yere to yere I deme
He let the feast of his natiuite
Doen crien, throughout Satra his cite
The last Idus of Marche, after the yere.
Phebus the Sunne, full iolie was & clere
For he was nie his exaltacion
In Marces face, and in his mancion
In Aries, the collerike, the hote signe
Full lustie was the weather and benigne
For which the foules, ayenst the sunne shene
What for the season, and the yong grene
Full loude song her affeccions
Hem semed han getten hem proteccions
Ayen the swerde of Winter kene and cold.
This Cābuscan, of which I haue you told
In roiall vestementes, sitte on his deis
With diademe, full hie in his paleis
And helde his feast so roiall and so riche
That in this worlde nas there non it liche
Of whiche, if I shall tell of all the arraie
Than would it occupie a Sommers daie
And eke it nedeth not to deuise
At euery course, the order of her seruice
I woll not tell of her straunge sewes
Ne of her Swannes, ne of her Heronsewes
Eke in that londe, as tellen knightes old
There is some meate, that is full dainte hold
That in this londe men retche of it but small
There is no man that maie reporten all.
I will not tarie you, for it is prime
And for it is no fruict, but losse of tyme
Unto my first purpose I woll haue recourse.
And so bifell that after the third course
While that this king sitte thus in his noblai
Herkening his minstralles her thinges plaie
Biforne hym at his borde deliciously
In at the hale doore all sodainly
There came a knight on a stede of brasse
And in his honde a brode mirrour of glasse
Upon his thombe he had of golde a ryng
And by his side a naked swerde hongyng
And vp he rideth to the hie borde
In all the halle ne was there spoke a worde
For marueile of the knight, hym to beyold
Full besily thei waiten yong and old
This straunge knight ỹ come thus sodenly
All armed saue his hedde, full roially
Salued kyng and quene, and lordes all
By order, as thei sitten in the hall
With so hie reuerence and obeisaunce
As well in speche as in countenaunce
That Gawaine with his old curtesie
Though he come ayen out of fairie
Ne could hym not amende of no worde
And after this, before the hie borde
He with a manly voice saied his message
After the forme vsed in his languge
Without vice of sillable or of letter
And for his tale should seme the better
Accordant to his wordes was his chere
As techeth art of speache hem that it lere
All be that I can not sowne his stile
Ne I ne can not climben so hie a stile
yet saie I thus as to my comen entent
Thus moche amounteth all that euer he ment
If it so be, that I haue it in my mynde
He saied: The kyng of Araby and of Inde
My liege lorde, on this solempne daie
Saludeth you, as he best can and maie
And sendeth you in honour of your feest
By me that am redy at your heest
This stede of brasse that easily and well
Can in the space of a daie naturell
This is to saie, in four and twentie houres
Where so ye list, in drought or in shoures
Beren your bodie into euery place
Into whiche your hart willeth to pace
Without weme of you, through foull or faire
Or if ye liste to fleen in the eire
As doeth an Egle, whan hym list to sore
This same stede shall beare you euermore
Withouten harme, till you ben there you list
Though that ye slepen on his backe and rest
And turne again with the writhyng of a pin
He that it wrought could full many a gin
He waited full many a constellacion
Or he had doen this operacion
And knewe full many a seale & many a bond.
This mirrour eke ỹ I haue in myn hond
Hath soche a might, that men maie in it se

When

Whan there shall fallen any aduersitee
Unto your reigne, or to your self also
And openly see, who is your friend and foe
And ouer all this, if any ladie bright
Hath set her hart on any maner wight
If he be false, she shall the treason see
His newe loue, and all his subteltee
So openly, that there shall nothyng hide.
Wherfore again this lustie Sommer tide
This mirrour and this ring, that ye maie se
He hath sent to my ladie Canace
your excellent doughter that is here.
The vertue of this ring, if ye woll here
Is this, that if she list it for to were
Upon her thombe, or in her purse it bere
There is no foule, that fleeth vnder heuen
That he ne shall vnderstonde his steuen
And knowe his meanyng openly and plain
And answere hym in his langage again
And euery grasse that groweth vpon rote
She shal well knowe, & whom it wol do bote
All be his woundes neuer so depe and wide.
This naked swerde, ỹ hangeth by my side
Soche vertue hath, ỹ what man so ye smite
Throughout his armure it woll kerue & bite
Were it as thicke as a braunched oke
And what man that is wounded w̄ the stroke
Shall neuer be hole, till that you list of grace
To stroken him with the platte in thilk place
There he is hurt, this is as moche to sain
Ye mote with the platte swerde again
Stroken him in the wound, and it wol close
This is very sothe withouten glose
It faileth not, whiles it is in your hold.
And whā this knizt hath thus his tale told
He rideth out of the halle, and doun he light
His stede, which that shone as Sonne bright
Stante in the court still as any stone
The knight is in to chamber ladde anone
He is vnarmed, and to the meate isette
And all that harneis bifore hym fette
This is to saine, the swerd & eke the mirrour
All borne was into the hye tour
with certain officers ordeined therefore
And to Canace the ring is bore
Solempnely, there she sate at the table
But likerly without any fable
The horse of brasse, that maie not be remeued
It stant, as it were to the ground iglewed
There maie no man out of the place it driue
For none engine, or windlas, or poliue
And cause why, for thei can not the craft
And therefore in the place thei han it laft
Till ỹ the knight hath taught hem ỹ manere
To boiden hem, as ye shall after here.

Great was ỹ prees, that swarmed to & fro
To gauren on the hors, that stondeth so
For it so hye was, and so brode and long
So well proporcioned for to been strong
Right as it were a stede of Lumbardie
Therewith so horsly, and so quicke of ye
As it a gentle courser of Poile were
For certes, fro his taile to his ere
Nature ne art coud hym not amende
In no degree, as all the people wende
But euermore her moste wonder was
How that he couth gon, and was of bras
It was of fairie, as the people semed
Diuers folke diuersly thei demed
As many heddes, as many wittes there been
Thei murmure, as doeth a swarme of Been
And maden shilles after her fantasies
Rehersyng of the old Poetries
And saied it was ilike the Pegase
The hors that had winges for to flee
Or els it was the Grekes hors Sinon
That brought Troie to destruccion
As men in this old bookes rede.
Myn hart (ỹ one) is euermore in drede
I trowe some men of armes been therein
That shapen hem this citee for to win
It wer right good, ỹ soche thinges wer know
And other rowned to his felawe lowe
And saied he lied, for it is rather ilike
An apparence made by some Magike
As Jogglours plaien at these feastes greate
Of sōdry thoughtes, thus thei iangle & treat
As leude people demeth comenly
Of thynges that been made more subtelly
Than thei can in her leudnesse comprehende
Thei demen gladly to the badder ende
And some of hem wondren on the mirrour
That borne was vp to the maister tour
How men might in it soche thynges se.
An other answerd, certes it might well be
Naturally by compositions
Of Angels and of slie reflections
And saiden, in Rome was soche on
Thei speken of Alocen and Vitillion
And Aristote, that writeth in her liues
Of queint mirrours, and of prospectiues
As knowen thei that han her bookes heard.
And other folke han wondred on ỹ sweard
That would perce through euery thyng
And fell in speche of Telophus the kyng
And of Achilles for his queinte spere
For he couth with it heale and dere
Right in soche wise as mē maie w̄ the swerd
Of which right now ye haue your selue herd
Thei speken of sondrie hardyng of metall

And

And spoken of medicins eke withal
And how,and whan it should hardned be
Which is vnknowe algate to me.
Tho speke they of Canaces ring
And sayden al,that suche a wonder thing
Of crafte of ringes herde they neuer non
Saue that Moses, and king Salomon
Had a name of conning of suche arte
Thus saien the people, & drawen hem aparte
But natheleſſe,some sayden that it was
Wonder to maken of ferne ashen,glas
And yet is glas not like aschen of ferne
But for they han knowen it so ferne
Therfore thei sesen her iangling & her wõder
As for wondren some on cause of thunder
On ebbe and flud,on gossomer,and on miste
And on all thing,til the cause is wiste.
Thus ianglen they,and demen and deuise
Till that the king gan fro his borde arise.
Phebus hath lefte the angle meridionall
And yet ascending was the beest royall
The gentle Lion with his Aldrian
Whan that this Tartre king Cambuscan
Rose from his bord,there as he sate full hye
Byforne him goth the loude minstralcye
Till he came to his chambre of paramentes
There as they sownen diuers instrumentes
That is like an heuen for to here.
Now dauncen lusty Venus children dere
For in the sisshe her lady sat full hye
And loketh on hem with a frendly eye.
This noble king is set vpon his trone
This straunge knight is set to him ful sone
And in the daunce he goeth with Canace
Here is the reuel and the iolyte
That is not able a dull man to deuise
He must han know loue and her seruise
And ben a feestliche man,as freshe as May
That should you deuise suche array.
Who couthe tellen you ỹ forme of daunces
So vncouth,and so freshe countenaunces:
Suche subtil lokinges, and dissimulinges
For drede of ialouse mens apperceiuinges
No man but Launcelot,and he is deed
Therfore I passe ouer al this lustyheed
I say no more, but in this iolynesse
I lete hem,til men to supper dresse.
The stewarde biddeth spices for to hye
And eke the wine,in all this melodye
The vshers and the squiers ben ygone
The spices and the wine is comen anone
They eten & drõken,& whan this had an ende
Unto the temple,as reason was,they wende
The seruice is done,they soupen all by day
What nedeth it to rehersen her array?
Eche man wot wel,that at a kinges feest
Is plenty,to the most and to the leest
And deintes mo,than ben in my knowing
And after supper goeth this noble king
To sen this horse of brasse, with all his route
Of lordes and of ladies him aboute
Such wõdring ther was on this hors of bras
That sithen the great siege of Troye was
There as men wondred on an horse also
Ne was there such a wondring,as was tho
But finally,the king asketh the knight
The vertue of this horse and the might
And praid him to tellen of his gouernaunce.
The horse anon gan to trippe and daunce
whan ỹ this knight laide hond on his raine
And said,sir there is no more to saine
But whan you liste to riden any where
Ye mote trill a pyn,stante in his ere
Whiche I shal tel you bytwene vs two
Ye mote nempne him to what place also
Or to what countre you list to ride
And whan ye come there you list abide
Bid him discende,and trille another pyn
For therin lieth the effect of all the gyn
And he wol downe discende,& don your will
And in that place he wol abide still
Though al ỹ world had the contrary swore
He shal not thens be ythrowe ne yborne
Or if you list bid him thens gon
Tryl this pyn,and he wol banisshe anon
Out of the sight of euery maner wight
And come ayen, be it day or night
whan that you list to clepen him againe
In such a gyse,as I shall to you saine
Bytwixt you and me,and that ful sone
Ride whã you list ther nys no more to done
Enfourmed whan ỹ king was of ỹ knight
And hath conceiued in his wit aright
The maner and the forme of al this thing
Ful glad and ful blith,the noble king
Repayreth to his reuel,as byforne
The bridel is in the toure yborne
And kept among his iewels lefe and dere
The horse vanished, I not in what maner
Out of her sight,ye get no more of me
But thus I lete in luste and iolyte
This Cambiscan,his lordes feasting
Till well nye the day began to spring.

Explicit prima pars:
& sequitur pars
secunda.

The Squiers tale.

THe noyce of digestion, the
slepe
Gan on hem winke, and bad
hem take kepe
That mirthe, drinke, and la-
bour wol haue reste
And with a galping mouth hem al he keste
And said, it was time to lye adoun
For blod was in his dominacioun
Cherissheth blod, natures frende (quod he)
They thanken him galping, by two by thre
And euery wight gan drawen him to his rest
As slepe hem bade, they toke it for the best.
Her dremes shul not now ben itolde for me
Ful were her heedes of fumosite
That causeth dreames, of whiche there is no
They slepen, til it was prime large (charge
The most part, but it were Canace
She was ful mesurable, as women be
For of her father had she take her leue
To gon to rest, sone after it was eue
Her list not appalled for to be
Nor on the morow, vnfeestliche for to se
And slept her first slepe, and awoke
For lucine a ioy she in her hert toke
Both of her queynt ringe, and of her mirrour
That twenty times she chaunged her colour
And in her slepe, right for impression
Of her mirrour, she had a vision
Wherfore, or the sonne vp gan glide
She cleped her maistresses her beside
And said, her list for to arise.
These olde women, that ben gladly wise
As is her maistres, answered her anon
And said: madame, whider woll ye gon
Thus erly for folke ben all in rest.
I woll (quod she arise) for me liste
No lenger for to slepe, but walken aboute.
Her maistresse cleped women a great route
And vp they rise, wel ten or twelue
Vp riseth freshe Canace her selue
As ioly and bright, as the yonge sunne
That in the Ram is four degrees vp ronne
No higher was he, whan she redy was
And forthe she walketh an easie paas
Arrayed after the lusty season sote
Lightly for to playen, and to walken on sote
Nought but fiue or sixe of her meyne
And in a trenche, fer in the parke goeth she.
The vapour, which that fro the erthe glode
Maketh the sunne to seme ruddy and brode
But natheless, it was so fayre a sight
That it made al her hertes for to light
What for the season, and for the morowning
And for the foules that she herde sing
For right anon, she wiste what they ment
Right by her songe, and knew al her entent.
The knot why, that euery tale is holde
If it be taried til lust be colde
Of hem that han it herkened after yore
The sauour passeth, euer lenger the more
For fulsomnes of prolixite
And by the same reason thinketh me
I should vnto the same knot condiscende
And make of her walking sone an ende.
Amidde a tre, for dye as white as chalke
As Canace was playyng in her walke
There sat a falcon ouer her heed full hye
That with a pitous voyce gan to crye
That all the wodde resouned of her cry
And beaten had her selfe so pitously
With both her winges, til the reed blode
Ran endlonge the tre, there as she stode
And euer in one, she cried and shright
And with her becke, her selfen so she pight
That there nas Tigre, ne cruel beste
That dwelleth in wodde, either in foreste
That nolde han wepe, if that thei wepe coude
For sorow of her, she shright alway so loude
For there was neuer yet man on liue
If that he couthe a faucon wel discriue
That herde of such another of fayrenesse
As wel of plumage, as of gentilnesse
Of shappe, of all that might irekened be
A faucon peregryn than semed she
Of frende londe, and euermore as she stoode
She swouned now & now, for lacke of blode
Til welny is she fall fro the tree.
This fayre kinges doughter, this Canace
That on her finger bare the queinte ring
Through which she vnderstode wel euery thig
That any foule may in his leden sayne
And coude answere him in his leden againe
Hath vnderstande, what this faucon seyde
And welny for routhe almost she deyde
And to the tree she goeth ful hastely
And on this faucon ful pitously
And helde her lappe abrode, for well she wiste
The faucon must fallen from the twiste
Whan ỹ she swouned next, for lacke of bloode
A longe while to waiten there she stoode
Til at the last she spake in this manere
Vnto the hauke, as ye shalen after here.
What is the cause, if it be for to tell
That ye ben in this furial paine of hell?
Quod Canace, vnto this hauke aboue
Is this for sorowe of death, or losse of loue?
For as I trowe, these ben causes two
That causen most a gentil hert wo
Of other harme it needeth not to spekę

For

For ye vpon your selfe you wreke
Which proueth wel, that either ire or drede
Mote ben enchelon of your cruel dede
Syn that I se none other wight you chace
For the loue of god, so doth your selfe grace
Or what may be your helpe, for west or eest
Ne sawe I neuer er now, no birde ne beest
That farde with him selue so pitously
Ye slee me with your sorow verily
I haue of you so great compassioun
For goddes loue come fro the tre adoun
And as I am a kinges doughter trewe
If that I verely the causes knewe
Of your disease, if it lay in my might
I would amende it, certes or it be night
As wisely helpe me great god of kinde
And herbes shall I right ynowe finde
To hele with your hurtes hastely.
Tho shright this faucon yet more spitously
Than euer she did, and fel to grounde anone
And lieth a swoune deed as is a stone
Till Canace hath in her lappe itake
Unto the time she gan of swoune awake
And after that she of swoune gan abreyde
Right in her haukes leden thus she seyde
That pite renneth soone in gentyl hert
(Feling his semilitude in paines smert)
Is proued al day, as men may se
As wel by werke as by authorite
For gentle hert kepeth gentilnesse
I se wel, that ye haue of my distresse
Compassion, my faire Canace
Of very womanly benignite
That nature in your principles hath sette
But for non hope for to fare the bette
But for to obey vnto your hert fre
And for to make other beware by me
As by the whelpe chastised is the Lion
Right for that cause, and for that conclusion
While that I haue a leyser and a space
Myne harme I wol confessen or I pace
And euer while that one her sorowe tolde
That other wepte, as she to water wolde
Til that the faucon badde her to be still
And with a sike, thus she said her till.
There I was bredde, alas that ilke day
And fostred in a roche of marble gray
So tenderly, that nothing eyleth me
I ne wist what was aduersite
Til I coude flie, ful hye vnder the skie
There dwelt a Tercelet me fast by
That semed wel of al gentilnesse
All were he ful of trayson and of falsnesse
It was so wrapped vnder humble chere
And vnder hewe of trouth, & in such manere
Under plesaunce, and vnder busy payn
That no wight coud haue wēde he coud fayn
So depe in greyne he died his colours
Right as a serpent hideth him vnder flours
Till he may se his time for to bite
Right so, this god of loues ipocrite
Doth so his serymones and obeysaunce
With his dissimuling, and faire assemblaunce
That sowneth vnto gentilnesse of loue
As in a tombe is all the faire aboue
And vnder the cors, suche as ye wote
Suche was this ipocrite colde and hote
And in this wise he serued his entent
That saue the fende, non wist what he ment
Til he so long had weped and complained
And many a yere his seruice to me plained
Til that myn hert, to pitous and to nice
All innocent of his cruel malice
For ferde of his deth, as thought me
Upon his othes and his surete
Graunted him loue, vpon this condition
That euermore mine honour and my renoun
Were saued, bothe preuy and apert
This is to say, that after his desert
I yaue him al min hert and al my thought
God wote, and in other wise nought
And toke his hert in chaunge of myn for aye
But so the is said, gone sithen many a day
I trewe wight and a theke thinketh not one
And whan he sawe the thing so fer igone
That I graunted him fully my loue
In suche a gise, as I haue said aboue
And yeuen him my true herte as fre
As he swore he yaf his hert to me
Anon this tigre, full of doublenesse
Fyl on his knees with so deuout humblesse
With hie reuerence, and eke by his chere
So like a gentill louer, as of manere
So rauished, as it semed for ioye.
That neuer Troylus, ne Paris of Troy
Jason certes, ne non other man
Sin Lameth was, that alderfirst began
To louen two, as writen folke before ne
Ne neuer sithen Adam was borne
Ne couthe man by twenty thousande parte
Counterfete the sophimes of his arte
Ne were worthy to vnbocle his galoche
Ther doublenesse or fayning should approche
Ne so couth thanke a wight, as he did me
His maner was an heuen for to se
Til any woman, were she neuer so wise
So paynteth he his chere point deuise
As wel his wordes, as his countenaunce
And I so loued him for his obeysaunce
And for the trouthe that I demed in his hert

That if so were that any thing him smert
Al were it neuer so lite, and I it wist
We thought I felt deth at my hert twist
And shortly, so ferforth this thing went
That my will was his willes instrument
That is to saye, my will obeied his will
In all thing, as ferre as reason fill
Keping the boundes of my worship euer
Ne neuer had I thing so lefe ne so leuer
As him god wote, ne neuer shal no mo
This last lenger then a yere or two
That I supposed of him nothing but good.
But finally, thus at the last it stode
That fortune would that he must twin
Out of that place, which that I was in
Where me was wo, it is no question
I can not make of it discription
For o thing dare I tell boldely
I knowe what the paine of deth is therby
Such harm I felte, that he ne might beleue
So on a day of me he toke his leue
So sorowfully eke, that I wende verely
That he had felte as moche harme as I
Whã that I herd him speke, & sawe his hewe
But natheles, I thought he was so trewe
And eke that he repaire should againe
Within a littell while sothe to saine
And reason wold eke, that he must go
For his honour, as ofte happeth so
That I made vertue of necessite
And toke it well, sithe it must nedes be
As I best might, I hidde fro him my sorow
And toke him by the hond, S. John to borow
And said thus: lo I am yours all
Both suche as I haue ben to you and shall
What he answerd, it nedeth not reherce
Who can sayn bet than he, who can do wers
Whan he hath al wel isaid, than hath he don
Therfore behoueth him a longe spone
That shal eten w a fende, thus herde I say
So at the last he mote forth his way
And forth he fleeth til he come there him lest
Whan it come him to purpose for to rest
I trowe he had thilke text in minde
That al thing repairing to his kinde
Gladeth hem selue, thus sain men as I gesse
Men louen of kinde newfangleneſſe
As briddes don, that men in cages fede
For though ÿ night and day take of hem hede
And strawe her cage faire and softe as silke
And giue hem sugre, hony, breed and milke
yet right anon as his doore is vp
He with his fete wold sporne adoun his cup
And to the wood he wold, and wormes eate
So newfangle ben they of her meate
And louen nouelries of proper kinde
No gentilneſſe of blode may hem binde
So ferde this Tercelet, alas the day
Tho he were gentel borne, freſshe and gay
And goodly for to se, and humble and free
He saw vpon a time a kite flee
And sodainly he loued this kite so
That al his loue is clene fro me go
And hath his trouth falsed in this wise
Thus hath the kite my loue in her seruice
And I am lorne without remedy.
And with ÿ worde this faucon gan to cry
And swouned ofte in Canaces barme
Gret was the sorow for that haukes harme
That Canace, and al her women made
They nist how they might her faucon glade
But Canace home bereth here in her lappe
And softely in plaisters gan her wrappe
There as she w̃ her becke had hurt her selue
Now can not Canace but herbes delue
Out of the grounde and make salues newe
Of herbes precious and fine of hewe
To helen with the hauke fro day to night
She doeth her beſineſſe, and all her might
And by her beddes heed she made a mewe
And couered it with veluettes blewe
In signe of trouthe, that is in women seene
And al without ÿ Mewe is painted grene
In whiche were painted al these false foules
As ben these tidefes, tercelettes, and owles
Right for dispite were painted hem beside
Pyes on hem for to cry and chyde.
This leue I Canace her hauke keping
I wol no more, as now speke of her ringe
Til it come efte to purpos for to sain
How that this faucon gate her loue again
Repentaunt, as the storye telleth vs
By mediation of Camballus
The kinges sonne, of whiche I of tolde
But henforthe I wol my proces holde
To speken of auentures, and of batails
That yet was neuer herd of so gret marueils
First wol I tel you of Cambuscan
That in his time many a cite wan
Howe that he wan Thedora to his wife
And after wol I speake of Algarsife
For whom full oft in great perill he was
Ne had he ben holpen by the horse of bras
And after woll I speake of Camballo
That fought in liſtes with the brethren two
For Canace, er that he might her win
And there I left, I woll agayn begin.

Explicit secunda pars,

Appollo

Appollo whirleth vp his chare so hie
Till that the god Mercurius house he flie.

¶ There can be founde no more of this forsaid tale, whiche hathe ben sought in diuers places.

¶ Here folowethe the wordes of the Marchaunte to the Squier, and the wordes of the Hoste to the Marchaunte.

IN faith Squier thou hast the wel quit
And gentely, I prayse well thy wit
Od the Marchaunt, considering thine youth
So felingly thou spekest, I the alouth
As to my dome, there is non that is here
Of eloquence, that shalbe thy pere
yf ỹ thou liue, god geue thi right good chaūce
And in vertue sende the perseueraunce
For of thy speking I haue great deinte
I haue a sonne, and by the Trinite
I had leuer than twenty pōdes worth londe
(Though it now were fallen in my honde)
He were a man of suche discression
As that ye ben: fye on possession
But if a man be vertuous with all
I haue my sonne snibbed, and yet shall
For he to vertue listeth nat to entende
But for to play at dise, and to spende
And lese all that he hath, is his vsage
And he had leuer talke with a page
Than to commen with any gentill wight
where he might lerne gentelnesse aright
Strawe for your gentilnesse (q our host)
what Marchant, pardy wel thou wost
That eche of you mote tellen at the lest
A tale or two, or breken your behest
That knowe I well (q the Marchāt) certain
I pray you haue me nat in disdain
Though I to this man speke a word or two
Tell on thy tale withouten wordes mo
Gladly sir host (q he) I woll obey
Unto your wil, now herkeneth what I sey
I wol you not contrary in no wise
As farre as my wittes may suffice
I pray to god that it may plesen you
Than wote I well, it is good inow.

¶ Thus endeth the wordes of the hoste and the Marchant, and here folowethe the Marchauntes prologue.

WEpinge and wailing, care and other sorowe
I haue ynowe, bothe euyn and eke a morowe
Od the Marchant, and so haue other mo
That wedded be, I trow that it be so
For well I wote it fareth so by me
I haue a wife, the worst that maie be
For though the fende coupled to her were
She wold him ouermatch I dare well swere
what should I reherse in speciall
Her high malice: she is a shrewe at all
Ther is a long and a large difference
Betwixte Griseldes great pacience
And of my wife the passing cruelte
were I vnbounde, also mote I the
I would neuer elle come in the snare
We wedded men liue in sorow and care
Assay who so woll, and he shal finde
That I say soth, by saint Thomas of Inde
As for the more parte, I say not all
God shelde that it should so befall
Ah good sir host, I haue wedded be
These monethes two, and more not parde
And yet I trowe he that all his life
Hath wedded be, though men him rife
In to the herte, ne couthe in no manere
Tell so muche sorowe, as I now here
Conde tell, of my wiues cursednesse
Now q our host Marchāt so god the blesse
Syn ye ben so much knowe of that arte
Ful hertely I pray you tell vs parte
Gladly q he, but of myn owne sore
For sory hert I tell may no more.

¶ Here endeth the Marchaunte prologue, and here folowethe his tale.

WHilom there was dwelling in Lumbardy
A worthy knight, that borne was at Pauy
In whyche he lyued in grate prosperite
And sixty yere a wifeles man was he
And folowed aye his bodely delite
On women, there as was his appetite
As don these foles that ben seculeres
And when that he was past sixty yeres
were it for holinesse or dotage
I can nat sain, but suche a great corage
Had this knight to ben a wedded man

The Marchauntes tale.

That day and night he doth all that he can
To espy, where that he wedded might be
Praying our lord to graunten him that he
Mighten ones knowen of that blisful life
That betwirt an husbonde and his wife
And for to liuen vnder that holy bonde
With which god first man and woman bonde
Non other life (said he) is worthe a bean
For wedlocke is so easy and so clean
That in this worlde it is a paradise
Thus sayth this olde knight that is so wise.
And certainly, as sothe as god is king
To take a wife, it is a glorious thing
And namely when a man is olde and hore
Than is a wife the fruite of his tresore
Than should he take a yonge wife and a faire
On which he might engendren him an heire
And lede his life in ioy and insolace
Where as these bachelers singen alas
When that they finden any aduersite
In loue, which nis but childes vanite
And trewly it sitte well to be so
That bachelers han oft paine and wo
On brotell grounde they bilden brotelnesse
They find freelte, whan they wenē secrenesse
They liue but as birdes or beestes
In liberty, and vnder nice arestes
There as a wedded man in his estate
Liueth a life blessfully and ordinate
Under the yoke of mariage ybounde
Wel may his hert in ioye and blisse habounde
For who can be so buxome as a wife?
Who is so trewe and eke so tentife
To kepe him sicke and hole as is his make
For wel no wo she nill him not forsake
She nis not wery him to loue and serue
Though that he lye bedrede till he sterue
And yet some clerkes sain, that it is nat so
Of which Theophrast is one of tho
What force though Theophrast list to lie
Ne take no wife (q he) for husbondrie
As for to spare in housholde thy despence
A trewe seruaunt doeth more diligence
Thy good to kepe, than thin owne wife
For she wol claime halfe parte all her life
And if that thou be sicke, so god me saue
Thy very frendes or a trewe knaue
Wol kepe the better, thā she that waiteth aye
After thy good, and hath don many a daye
And if thou take a wife to the vntrewe
Full oft time it shall the sore rewe
This sentence, and an hundred sithes worse
Writeth this man there, god his bones curse
But take no kepe of suche vanite
Defieth Theophrast, and herkeneth me.

A wife is goddes yefte verely
All other maner yeftes hardely
As londes, rentes, pasture, or commune
Or mouables, all ben yeftes of fortune
That passen, as a shadow on a wall
But dred nat, if plainly spehe I shall
A wife wol last and in thin house endure
Wel lenger than thy list parauenture
Mariage is a full great sacrament
He whiche hath no wife I holde him shent
He liueth helples, and all desolate
I spehe of folke, in seculer estate.
And herkeneth why, I say not this for nought
A woman is for mannes helpe ywrought
The hye God, when he had Adam maked
And saw him alone bely naked
God of his great goodnesse said than
Lette vs maken an helpe to this man
Like to him selfe, and than he made Eue
Here may ye se, and hereby may ye preue
That a wife is mans helpe and confort
His paradise terrestre and his disport
So buxome and so vertuous is she
Thei must nedes liue in vnite
One flesche they ben, & two soules as I gesse
Nat but one hart in wele and in distresse
A wife, ah saint Mary, benedicite
How might a man haue any aduersite
That hath a wife? certes I can nat say
The blisse that is betwirte hem twey
There may no tonge tellen or herte thinke
If he be pore, she helpeth him to swinke
She kepeth his good, wasteth neuer a dell
All that her husbonde lust, her liketh well
She saith nat ones nay, when he sayth ye
Do this (saith he) a redy sir (saith she)
O blisfull order of wedlocke precious
Thou arte so mery, and eke so vertuous
And so commended, and so approued eke
That euery man that halt him worthy a leke
Upon his bare knees ought all his life
Thanken god, that him hath sent a wife
Or pray to God him for to sende
A wife, to last vnto his liues ende
For than his life is sette in sekernesse
He may not be disceiued, as I gesse
So that he werche after his wiues rede
Than may he boldely bearen vp his hede
They ben so trewe and also wise
For which, if thou wilt werchen as the wise
Do alway so, as women woll the rede
Lo how that Jacob, as these clerkes rede
By good counsayle of his mother Rebecke
Bounde the kidde skin about his necke
For which his fathers benelon he wan

Lo

Lo Judith, as the ſtorie tell can
By wiſe counſaill Goddes people kept
And ſlue him Holofernes while he ſlept
And Abigail by counſaill, how ſhe
Saued her huſbonde Naball, whan that he
Should haue be ſlain. And looke Hester alſo
By good counſaill deliuered out of wo
The people of God, & made him Mardochee
Of Assure enhaunſed for to be.
There nis nothing in gree ſuperlatife
(As ſaieth Senec) aboue an humble wife
Suffre thy wiues tongue, as Caton bit
She ſhall cōmaunde, and thou ſhalt ſuffre it
And yet ſhe woll obeie of curteſie
A wife is keper of thine huſbondrie
Well maie the ſicke man waile and wepe
There as there nis no wife the houſe to kepe
I warne thee, if wiſely thou wilt werche
Loue thy wife, as Chriſt loueth his cherche
If thou loue thy ſelf, thou loueſt thy wife
No, no man hateth his fleſhe: but in his life
He foſtreth it, and therefore bid I thee
Cheriſhe thy wife, or thou ſhalt neuer ithee
Huſbond and wife, what ſo men iape or play
Of worldly folke hold the ſeker waie
Thei be ſo knit, there maie non harme betide
And namely vpon the wiues ſide
For whiche Januarie, of whiche I told
Conſidred hath in his daies old
The luſtie life, the vertuous quiete
That is in mariage honie ſwete
And for his frendes on a daie he ſent
To tellen hem theffect of his entent.
With face ſadde, his tale hath he hem told
He ſaied frendes, I am hoore and old
And almoſte (God wot) on the pittes brinke
Upon my ſoule ſom what muſt I thinke
I haue my bodie folily diſpended
Bleſſed be God, it ſhall been amended
For I woll been certain a wedded man
And that anon in all the haſt I can
Unto ſome maide, faire and tender of age
I praie you shapeth for my mariage
All ſodainly, for I woll nat abide
And I woll fonden to eſpie on my ſide
To whom I maie be wedded haſtely
But for as moche as ye been more than I
Ye ſhullen rather ſoche a thing eſpien
Than I, and there me luſt beſt to alien
But one thing warne I you my frēdes dere
I woll non old wife haue in no manere
She ſhall not paſſe fiftene yere certain
Old fiſhe and yong fleſhe woll I haue fain
Better is (q he) a Pike then a Pikereell
And better than old Beke is the tender Veell
I woll no woman of thirtie Winter age
It nis but Beanſtrawe and great forage
And eke theſe old widowes (God it wote)
Thei connen ſo moche craft in Wades bote
So moche broken harme whan hem liſt
That with hem ſhould I neuer liue in reſt
For ſondrie ſcholes maketh ſubtell clerkes
A woman of many ſcholes halfe a clerke is
But certainly, a yong thing maie men gie
Right as mē maie warm Waxe with hādes plie
Wherefore I ſaie you plainly in a clauſe
I nill non old wife haue for this cauſe.
For if ſo were that I had miſchaunce
And in her couth haue no pleaſaunce
Than ſhould I lede my life in aduoutrie
And ſo ſtreight to the deuill whan I die
Ne children ſhould I non vpon her geten
Yet had I leuer houndes had me eaten
Than that mine heritage ſhould fall
In ſtraunge hondes: and thus I tell you all
I dote nat, I wotte the cauſe why
Men ſhould wedden, and furthermore wot I
There ſpeaketh many a man of matiage
That wot no more of this than doth my page
For whiche cauſes men ſhould take a wife
If he maie nat liue chaſt his life
Take him a wife with great deuocion
Bicauſe of leſull procreacion
Of children, to the honour of God aboue
And not onely for paramour or for loure
And for thei ſhoulden Lecherie eſchue
And yelde his dettes whan that it is due
Or for that eche man ſhould helpen other
In miſchief, as a ſuſter ſhould the brother
And liue in chaſtite full heauenly.
But ſirs (by your leaue) that am not I
For God be thanked, I dare make auaunt
I fele my limmes hole and ſufficiaunt
To doen all that a man belongeth to
I wotte my ſelue beſt what I maie do
Though I be hore, I fare as doeth a tree
That bloſſometh er that fruict i wore be
The bloſſomed tree is neither drie ne dedde
I fele no where hore but on my hedde
Mine hart and my limmes been as grene
As Laurell is through the yere to ſeen
And ſithen that ye han heard all mine entent
I praie you to my will ye woll aſſent.
Diuers men diuerſly hem told
Of mariage, many enſamples old
Some blameth it, ſome praiſeth is certain
But at the laſt, ſhortly for to ſain
(As all daie falleth alteracion
Betwirt frendes and diſputacion)
There fell a ſtrief betwixt his brethren two

Of whiche that one was cleped Placebo
Justinus sothly called was that other
Placebo saied: O Januarie brother
Full litell nede han ye my Lorde so dere
Counsaill to are of any that is here
But that ye been so full of sapience
That you ne liketh for your hie prudence
To waiue fro the worde of Salomon
This worde saieth he vnto euerichone
Worke all thyng by counsaill, thus saied he
And than shalt thou nat repent thee
But tho that Salomon spake soche a worde
Mine owne dere brother and my Lorde
So wisely God my soule bring to ease a rest
I hold your owne counsaill for the best.
For brother mine, take of me this motife
I haue been now a court man all my life
And God wote, though I now vnworthy be
I haue stonden in full great degree
Abouen Lordes in full great estate
Yet had I neuer with non of hem debate
I neuer hem contraried truely
I wote well that my lorde can more than I
That he saieth, I holde it ferme and stable
I saie thesame, or els thing semblable
A full greate foole is any counsailour
That serueth any Lorde of hie honour
That dare presume, or ones thinke it
That his counsail should passe his lordes wit
Naie, Lordes be no fooles be my faie
ye haue your self spoken here to daie
So hie sentence, so holy, and so well
That I consent, and confirme euery dell
Your wordes all, and your opinion
By God there nis no man in all this toun
Ne in Italie, coud bette haue saied
Christ holdeth hym of this full well a paied
And truely it is an hie corage
Of any man that is stopen in age
To taken a yong wife, by my father kin
Your hart hongeth on a ioly pin
Doeth now in this mater right as you lest
For finally I hold it for the best.
Justinus that aie sat and herde
Right in this wise to Placebo he answerde
Now brother mine be pacient I you praie
Sith ye haue said, now herkneth what I say
Seneck emong other wordes wise
Saieth, that a man ought hym well auise
To whom he yeueth his londe or his catell
And sithens I ought auise me right well
To whom I giue my goodes awaie fro me
Well moche more I ought auised be
To whom I giue my bodie: for alwaie
I warne you well it is no childes plaie
To take a wife without auisement
Men must enquire (this is mine assent)
Wheder she be sober, wise, or dronkelewe
Or proude, or other waies a shrewe
A chider, or a waster of thy good
Other riche or poore, or els a man is wood
All be it so, that no man finde shall
Non in this worlde, that trotteth hole in all
Ne man, ne beast, soche as men can deuise
But natheles, it ought inough suffice
With any wife, if so were that she had
Mo good thewes, than her vices bad
And all this asketh laiser to enquere
For God wot I haue wept many a tere
Full priuely, sith I had a wife
Praise who so woll a wedded mannes life
Certain I finde in it but cost and care
And obseruaunces of all blisses bare
And yet God wotte, my neighbours about
And namely of women many a rout
Sain that I haue the moste stedfast wife
And eke the mekest one that beareth life
But I wot best, where wringeth me my shoe
Ye maie for me, right as you list doe
Auise you, ye been a man of age
How that ye entren into mariage
And namely with a yong wife and a faire
By him that made water, yearth, and aire
The yongest man that is in all this rout
Is besie inowe to bring it about
To haue his wife alone, trusteth me
Ye shall not pleasen her yeres thre
This is to sain, to doen her pleasaunce
A wife asketh full moche obseruaunce
I praie you that ye be not euill apaied.
Well (q this Januarie) and hast thou al said?
Straw for thy Senec, and for thy prouerbes
I count it not worth a pannier of herbes
Of schoole termes, wiser men than thou
As thou hast heard, assenteth it right now
To my purpose Placebo, what saie ye?
I saie it is a cursed man (q he)
That letteth Matrimonie sekerly
And with that worde thei risen sodainly
And been assented fully, that he should
Be wedded whan him list, & where he would
High fantasie and curiousnesse
Fro daie to daie, gan in the soule empresse
Of Januarie, about his mariage
Many a faire shappe, and many faire visage
Ther passeth through his hart night by night
As who so toke a mirrour polished bright
And set it in a comon market place
Than should he se many a figure pace
By his mirrour, and in thesame wise

Gan

Gan Januarie within his thought deuise
Of maidens, whiche that dwellen beside
He wist not where he might abide
For if that one had beautie in her face
An other stont so in the peoples grace
For her sadnesse and her benignite
That of the people greatest voice had she
And some were riche and had bad name
But nethelesse, betwixt earnest and game
He at last appoincted hym on one
And let all other from his hart gone
And chese her of his owne aucthoritee
For loue is blinde all daie, and maie not see
And whan that he was in his bedd ibrought
He purtreide in his hart and in his thought
Her freshe beaute, and her age tender
Her midle small, her armes long and slender
Her wise gouernaunce, and her gentilnesse
Her womanly bearyng, and her sadnesse
And whan he was on her condiscended
Him thouzt his choise might nat ben amēded
For whan that he himself concluded had
Him thought eche other mennes wit so bad
That impossible it were to replie
Ayenst his choice, this was his fantasie
His frendes sent he to, at his instaunce
And praieth hem to don him that pleasaunce
That hastely thei would to him come
He would bredgen her labour all and some
Nēdeth no more for him to go ne ride
He was appoincted there he would abide
Placebo came, and eke his frendes sone
And alderfirst he bad hem all a bone
That non of hem non argumentes make
Ayenst his purpose that he hath itake
Which purpose was pleasant to God (said he)
And very ground of his prosperite.
He said there was a maiden in the toune
Whiche of beautie hath greate renoune
All were it so, she were of small degre
Suffiseth him her youth and her beautie
Which maide he said, he would haue to wife
To leden in ease and his holines of life
And thanketh God, ẏ he might hauen her all
That no wight his blisse parten shall
And praieth hem to labour in this nede
And shapeth that he faile nat to spede
For than he saied, his spirite was at ease
Than is (ꝙ he) nothyng maie me displease
Saue O thing pricketh in my conscience
The whiche I wol rehearse in your presence
I haue (ꝙ he) heard saie full yore ago
There maie no man haue parfite blisses two
This is to saie, in yearth and eke in heauen
For though he kept him fro the sinnes seuen
And eke from euery braunche of thilke tree
Yet is there so parfite prosperitee
And so greate ease and lust in mariage
That euer I am agast now in mine age
That I shall lede now so merie a life
So delicate without wo or strife
That I shal haue mine heuen in yearth here
For sithen very heauen is bought so dere
With tribulacion and great penaunce
How should I than liuyng in soch plesaunce
As all wedded men doen with their wiues
Com to the blisse, ther Christ eterne on liue is
This is my drede, and ye my brethren tweie
Assoileth me this question I you preie.
Justinus, whiche that hated his folie
Answerd anon right in his iaperie
And for he would his long tale abrege
He would non aucthorite allege
But saied: sir, so there be non obstacle
Other than this, God of his hie miracle
And of his mercie maie so for you werche
That er ye han your rightes of holy cherche
Ye maie repent of wedded mannes life
In whiche ye sain is neither wo ne strife
And els God forbede, but if he sent
A wedded man grace him to repent
Well after, rather than a single man
And therefore sir, the best rede that I can
Despeireth you not, but haue in memorie
Parauenture she maie be your purgatorie
She maie by Goddes meane & Goddes whip
Than shall your soule vp to heauen skip
Swifter than doeth an arowe out of a bowe
I hope to God hereafter ye shall knowe
That there nis non so great felicitee
In mariage, ne neuer non shall bee
That you shall let of your saluacion
So that ye vse it as skill is and reason
The lustes of your wife attemperatly
And that ye please her nat to amorously
And that ye kepe you eke from other sin
My tale is doen, for my witte is thin
Beth not agast hereof my dere brother
But let vs wade fro this matter to an other
The wife of Bathe, if ye vnderstande
Of mariage, whiche ye haue in hande
Declareth full well in a little space
Fareth now well, God haue yeuin his grace.
And with this word, Justine & his brother
Han take her leaue, and eche of hem of other
For whan thei sawe it must nedes be
Thei wrought so by wise and slie treate
That she this maide whiche Maie hight
As hastely as euer that she might
Shall wedded be to this Januarie

The Marchauntes tale.

I trowe it were to long to you to tarie
If I you told of euery escrite and bonde
By whiche he was feoffed in his londe
Or for to herken of her riche araie
But finally icomen is the daie
That to chirche bothe been thei went
For to receiue the holy Sacrament
Forth cometh ẏ priest, w̄ stole about his necke
And badde her be like Sara and Rebeck
In wisedome and trueth of mariage
And saied his orisons, as is the vsage
And crouched hem, & bad God shuld hem bles
And made all seker inowe with holines
Thus been thei wedded with solempnite
And at feast sitteth he and she
With other worthy folke vpon the deies
All full of ioie and blisse is the palaies
And full of instrumentes and of vitaile
The moste deintes of all Itaile
Beforne him stode instrumentes of soch soun
That Orpheus, ne of Thebes Amphion
Ne made neuer soche a melodie.
At euery cours came loude minstralcie
That neuer Joab tromped for to here
Neither Theodomas yet halfe so clere
At Thebes, whan the citee was in dout
Bacchus the wine hem skinketh all about
And Venus laugheth on euery wight
For Januarie was become her knight
And would bothe assain his corage
In liberte, and eke in mariage
And with her fire bronde in her hond about
Daunceth before the bride and all the rout
And certainly, I dare well saie right this
Emenius that God of weddyng is
Saw neuer in his life, so mery a wedded mā
Hold thou thy peace thou poet Marcian
That writest vs that ilke weddyng merie
Of Philologie and hym Mercurie
And of the songes that the Muses song
To small is bothe thy penne and eke thy tong
For to discriuen of this mariage
Whā tēder youth hath iwedded stouping age
Ther is soche mirth, ẏ it maie not be written
Assaieth your self, than maie ye witten
If that I lacke or non in this matere
Maie that sitte, with so benigne a chere
Her to behold, it semed fairie
Quene Hester loked neuer with soche an iye
On Assuere, so meke a looke hath she
I maie you nat deuise all her beaute
But thus moche of her beautie tell I maie
That she was like the bright morow of May
Fulfilde of al beautie, and of pleasaunce
This Januarie is rauished in a traunce
And at euery tyme he looked in her face
But in his hart, he gan her to manace
That he ẏ night, in his armes wold her strein
Harder, than euer Paris did Helein
But natheles, yet had he greate pite
That thilke night, offende her must he
And thought alas, O tender creature
Now would God ye might well endure
All my corage, it is so sharpe and kene
I am agast, ye shall it nat sustene
But God forbede, that I did all my might
Now would God that it were waxe night
And that the night would last euer mo
I would that all these people were ago
And finally he doeth all his labour
As he best might, sauyng his honour
To hast hem fro the meate in subtill wise
The tyme came, that reason was to rise
And after that men dauncen, and drinke fast
And spices all about the house thei cast
And full of ioie and blisse is euery man
All but a squier, that hight Damian
Whiche carfe before the knight many a daie
He was so rauished on his Lady Maie
That for very pain he was nye wode
Almost he swelt, and sowouned ther he stode
So sore hath Venus hurt hym w̄ her brande
So freshe she was, and therto so licande
And to his bedde he went hym hastely
No more of him at this tyme speake I
But there I let hym wepe inowe and plain
Till the freshe Maie woll rewen on his pain
O perilous fire, ẏ in the benstraw bredeth
O familier foe, that his seruice bedeth
O seruaunt traitour, false homely hewe
Like to the Adder slie in bosome vntrue
O Januarie dronken in plesaunce
God shilde vs all from your iniquitaunce
Of mariage, se how this Damian
Thyne owne squier and thy borne man
Entendeth to doen thee villanie
God graunt thee thine homely foe to espie
For in this worlde nis wers pestilence
Than homely foe, all daie in thy presence
Parformed hath the sunne his arke diurne
No lenger maie the body of him soiourne
On orisont, as in that latitude
Night with his mantill, that is darke & rude
Gan for to sprede, the Hemisperie about
For whiche departed is the lustie rout
Fro Januarie, with thonke on euery side
Home to her hous lustely thei ride
There as thei doen her thinges, as hem lest
And whan thei sawe her tyme to go to rest
Sone after this lustie Januarie

Woll

woll go to bedde, he would no lenger tarie
He drinketh Ipocras, clareie, and bernage
Of spices hote, to encrease his corage
And many a lectuarie had he full fine
Soche as the cursed monke dan Constantine
Hath written in his booke of Coitu
To eten hem al he nolde nothyng eschewe
And thus to his priuie frendes saied he
For Goddes loue, as sone as it maie be
Let voied all this house in curteis wise sone
Wen drinken, and the trauers drue anon
So hasted Januarie, it must be doen
The bride was brought to bed as still as ston
And whā the bed was with the priest iblessed
Out of ꝑ chāber hath euery wight hē dressed
And Januarie hath fast in armes take
His freshe Maie, his paradise, his make
He lulleth her, he kisseth her full oft
With thicke brissels of his berde vnsoft
Like the skin of Houndfish, as sharp as brere
For he was shaue all newe in his manere
He rubbeth her vpon her tender face
And saied thus: Alas, I mote trespace
To you my spouse, and you greatly offende
Or tyme come that I woll doune discende
But natheles, considereth this (ꝙ he)
There nis no workeman, what so euer he be
That maie bothe wirche well and hastely
This woll be doen at leiser parfitly
It is no force how long that we plaie
In true wedlocke coupled be we twaie
And blessed be the yoke that we been in
For in our actes we mowe doe no sin
A man maie doe no synne with his wife
Ne hurt hym self with his owne knife
For we haue leaue to plaie vs by the lawe
Thus laboureth he, till the daie gan dawe
And than he taketh a soppe of fine clarre
And vpright in his bedde than sitteth he
And after that he singeth full loude and clere
And kist his wife, and maketh wanton chere
He was all coltish, and full of ragerie
And full of gergon, as is a flecked Pie
The slacke skin about his necke shaketh
While that he sang, so chaūteth he & craketh
But god wot what Maie thought in her hert
Whan she hym sawe, vp sittyng in his shert
In his night cappe, with his necke lene
She praiseth not his playing worth a Bene
Than saied he thus: my rest woll I take
Now daie is come, I maie no lenger wake
And doun he laied his hed, and slept til prime
And afterward, whan that he sawe his time
Up riseth Januarie, but the freshe Maie
Holdeth her chamber to the fourth daie
As vsage is of wiues for the best
For euery labour somtyme mote haue rest
Or els long maie he not endure
This is to saie, no liues creature
Be it fisshe or beast, bridde or man.
Now woll I speake of wofull Damian
That langureth for loue, as ye shall here
Therefore I speake to hym in this manere.
I saie, O sely Damian, alas
Answere to this demaunde, as in this caas
How shalt thou to thy lady freshe Maie
Tell thy wo: She woll alwaie saie naie
Eke if thou speake, she woll thy wo bewraie
God be thyn helpe, I can no better saie
This sicke Damian in Venus fire
So brenneth, that he dieth for desire
For whiche he put his life in auenture
No lenger might he in this wise endure
But priuely a penner gan he borowe
And in a letter wrote he all his sorowe
In maner of a complaint or a laie
Unto this faire and freshe lady Maie
And in a purse of silke, hongyng on his shert
He hath it put, and laied it at his hert
The Moone at noon tide that ilke daie
(That Januarie hath iwedded freshe Maie)
Out of Taure was in the Cantire gleden
So long hath Maie in her chamber bidden
As custome is, vnto these nobles all
A bride shall not eaten in the hall
Till daies four, or thre at the least
Ipassed been, than let her goon to feast.
The fourth daie cōplete fro noon to noon
Whan that the hie Masse was idoen
In hall sat this Januarie and Maie
As freshe as is the bright Somers daie
And so bifell, how that this good man
Remembreth hym vpon this Damian
And saied: sainct Mary, how maie this be
That Damian entendeth not to me:
Is he aie sicke: or how maie this betide:
His squiers, which that stoden him beside
Excused hym, because of his sickenesse
Whiche letted hym to doen his besinesse
Non other cause might make hym tarie
That me forthinketh (ꝙ this Januarie)
He is a gentle squire be my trouth
If that he died, it were harme and routh
He is as wise, discrete, and secre
As any man that I wote of his degre
And therto manly and seruisable
And for to be a thriftie man right able
But after meate, as sone as euer I maie
I woll my self viset hym, and eke Maie
To doen hym all the comfort that I can

And

And for that worde, hym blessed euery a man
That of his bounte and of his gentilnesse
He would so comforten in his distresse
His squier, for it was a gentle deede.
Dame (q this Januarie) take good heede
That after meate, ye and your women all
(Whan ye haue ben in chāber out of this hal)
That all ye gone to see this Damian
Doeth hym disport, he is a gentill man
And tellen hym that I woll hym visite
Haue I nothyng but rested me a lite
And spede you fast, for I woll abide
Till that ye slepe fast by my side
And with that worde he gan to hym call
A squier, that was Marshall of his hall
And told hym certain thing that he would.
This fresh Maie hath streight her way ihold
With all her women, vnto this Damian
Doune by his beddes side sat she than
Comfortyng hym as goodlie as she maie.
This Damian, whan that he his time say
In secrete wise, his purse and eke his bill
(In whiche he had written all his will)
Hath put into her honde withouten moze
Saue that he sighed wonders depe and soze
And sothly, to her right thus saied he
Mercie, and that ye discouer nat me
For I am dedde, if that this thyng be kid
This purse hath she in her bosome hid
And went her waie, ye get no moze of me
But vnto Januarie icome is she
And on his beddes side she sit full soft
He taketh her, and killeth her full oft
And laied hym doun to slepe, and that anon
She fained her, as that she must gon
Ther as ye wote, that euery wight hath nede
And whan she of this bill hath taken hede
She rent it all to cloutes, and at last
Into the priuie, sothly she it cast.
Who studieth now but faire freshe Maie?
And adoun by Januarie she laie
That slept, till the cough hath hym awaked
Anon he praied her to stripe her all naked
He would of her (he said) haue some plesance
He saied her clothes did hym encombrance
And she obeieth be she lefe or loth
But lest that precious folk be with me wroth
How that he wrought, I dare nat to you tell
Or wheder she thought it paradise or hell
But I let hem worche in her wise
Till euensong ryng, that thei must arise.
Were it by destenie or by aduenture
Were it by influence, or by nature
Or constellacion that in soche estate
The heuen stoode, that tyme fortunate
(Was for to put a bill of Venus werkes)
For all thyng hath tyme, as saien clerkes
To any woman for to gete her loue
I can not saie, but the great God aboue
That knoweth, that non act is causeles
He deme all, for I woll hold my pees.
But soth is this, how that this fresh Maie
Hath take soche impression that daie
Of pite, on this sicke Damian
That fro her hart she driue ne can
The remembraunce for to doen hym eate
Certain (thought she) whō this thing displeate
I recke not, for this I hym assure
I loue hym best of any creature
Though he no more had than his shert.
Lo pite renneth sone in gentle hert
Here maie ye se, how excellent franchise
In women is, whan thei hem narow auise
Some tyraunt is, as there been many one
That hath an hart as hard as any stone
Whiche would haue let hym sterue in ỹ place
Wel rather thā haue graunted him her grace
And her reioised in her cruell pride
And not haue retched to been an homicide.
This gentill Maie, fulfilled of all pite
Right so of her honde a letter made she
In whiche she graunted hym her very grace
There lacketh nought, but onely time & place
Where that she might to his lust suffice
For it shall be, right as he woll deuise
And whan she sawe her tyme vpon a daie
To visite this Damian goth this faire Maie
And suttelly this letter doune she thrust
Under his pillowe, rede it if hym list
She taketh him by the hōd, & hard him twist
So secretly, that no wight of it wist
And bad him ben all hole, and forth she went
To Januarie, whan that he for her sent
Up riseth Damian the next morowe
All passed was his sicknes and his sorowe
He kēbeth him and proineth him and pyketh
And doeth all that his Lady lust and liketh
And eke to Januarie he goeth as lowe
As euer did a dogge for the bowe
He is so pleasaunt to euery man
For craft is all, who that it can
That euery wight is fain to speken him good
And fully in his ladies grace he stood
Thus let I Damian about his nede
And in my tale, forth I woll procede.
Some clerkes holden that felicite
Stont in delite, and therfore certain he
This noble Januarie with all his might
In honest wise as longeth to a knight
Shope hym to liue full delicteously

His

His housing, his array, as honestly
To his degre, was made as a kinges
Among other of his honest thinges
He had a garden walled all with stone
So faire a garden was there neuer none
For out of dout, I verily suppose
That he that wrote the Romant of the Rose
Ne couth of it the beaute wel deuise
Ne Priapus, ne might not suffise
Thoughe he be god of gardens, for to tell
The beaute of the garden, and of the well
That stont vnder a laurer alway grene
Ful oft time king Pluto and his quene
Proserpina, and al her fayrie
Disporten hem, and maken melody
About that well, and daunced as men tolde
This noble knight, this January the olde
Such deynte hath, in it to walke and play
That he wol suffre no wight to bere the kaye
Saue he him selfe, for the smal wicket
He bare alway of siluer a clicket
With which, whan that him list vnshet
And whan that he wold pay his wife her det
In somer season, thider would he go
And May his wife, & no wight but they two
And thiges which that were not don a bedde
He in ỹ garden perfourmed hem and spedde
And in this wise, many a mery day
Liued this January and this freshe May
But worldly ioye may nat alway endure
To January, ne to no liuing creature.
O sodaine hape, O thou fortune vnstable
Like to the Scorpion disceiuable
That flatrest vo thy heed whan ỹ wolt stinge
Thy taile is deth, thrugh thine enuenoming
O brotell ioye, O swete poison queint
O monster, that so sodainly canst peint
Thy giftes, vnder the hewe of stedfastnesse
That thou disceiuest bothe more and lesse
Why hast thou January thus disceiued?
And haddest him for thy frende receiued
And now thou hast beraft him both his eyen
For sorow of which desireth he to dyen
Alas, this noble January that is so fre
Amidde his lust and his prosperite
Is woxen blind, and all sodainly
His dethe therfore desireth he vtterly
And therwithal, the fire of iealousy
(Lest that his wife should fall in some foly)
So brent his hert, that he would faine
That some man, both him and her had slaine
For neuer after his death, ne in his life
Ne would he that she were loue ne wife
But euer liue a widowe in clothes blacke
Sole, as the turtle doth ỹ hath lost her make
But at the last, after a moneth or twaie
His sorowe gan to swage, soth to saie
For whan he wist it might non other be
He paciently tooke his aduersite
Saue out of dout maie he nat for gone
That he nas ielous euer more in one
Whiche iealousie, it was so outragious
That neither in hall ne in none other hous
Ne in non other place neuer mo
He nolde suffer, neither ride ne go
But if that he had honde on her alwaie
For whiche full often wepeth freshe Maie
That loued Damian so benignely
That she mote either die sodainly
Or she mote haue him at her lest
She waiteth whan her hart should to brest
Upon that other side Damian
Become is, the sorowfullest man
That euer was, for neither night ne daie
Ne might he speake a worde to freshe Maie
As to his purpose of no soche matere
But if that Januarie must it here
That had an hande vpon her euer mo
But natheles, by writing to and fro
And preuy signes, wist he what she ment
And she knew all the signes of his entent.
O January, what might the it auaile
Tho thou mightest se, as fer as shippes saile
For as good is a blinde man disceiued be
As to be disceiued, whan that a man may se.
Lo Argus, which had an hundred eyen
For al that euer he couth pore and prien
Yet was he blent, and god wot so ben mo
That wenen wisely that it is not so
Passe ouer is an ease, I say no more.
The fresh May, of which I spake of yore
In warme ware hath printed this clicket
That January bare of that small wicket
By which vnto his garden oft he went
And Damian that knew her entent
The clicket counterfaited priuely
There nis no more to say, but hastely
Some wonder by this clicket shall betide
Which ye shall heren, if ye wol abide.
O noble Ouide, soth sayest thou god wote
What sligh is it, though it be long and hote
That he nil finde it out in some manere
By Pyramus and Thisbe, may men lere
Thouz they were kept ful long streit ouer all
They ben accorded, rowning through a wal
Ther nis no wight couth finde such a sleight
But now to purpose, er the daies eight
Were passed, er the moneth Iule befill
That January hath caught so great a will
Through eggyng of his wife him for to play

The Marchauntes tale.

In his garden, and no wight but thei tway
That in a morow, vnto this May said he
Rise vp my wife, my loue, my lady fre
The turtell voice is herde my lady swete
The winter is gon, with al his raines wete
Come forth now with thin eyen columbine
Now fayrer ben thy brestes than is wine
The garden is enclosed all about
Come forth my white spouse out of dout
Thou hast me wounded in my hert, o, wife
No spotte in the nas in all thy life
Come forth and let vs taken our disport
I chese the for my wife and my comfort
Such olde leude wordes vsed he
On Damian a signe made she
That he shuld go before with his clichet
This Damian hath opened this wicket
And in he stert, and that in suche manere
That no wight might it se ne here
And stil he sat vnder a bushe anon.
This January, as blinde as is a ston
With May in his hande, and no wight mo
Into his fresh garden is he go
And clapte to the wicket sodainly.
Now wife (q he) here nis but thou and I
That arte the creature that I best loue
For by that lord that sit vs all aboue
I had leuer dien on a knife
Than the offende, dere true wife
For goddes sake thinke how I the chees
Nat for couetise, ne other good doutles
But onely for the loue I had to the
And though that I be olde and may not se
Be to me true, and I wol tell you why
Certes, thre thinges shall ye win therby
First loue of Christ, & to your self honour
And all mine heritage, toune and tour
I giue it you, maketh charters as ye lift
This shal be don to morow er sunne rift
So wisely god my soule bring to blisse
I pray you on couenaunt that ye me kisse
And though that I be ielous wite nought
Ye ben so depe enprented in my thought
That whan I consider your beaute
And therwithal, the vnlikly elde of me
I may not certes, though I should die
Forbere, to ben out of your company
For very loue, this is withouten dout
Now kisse me wife, and let vs rome about
This fresche May whan she these words herd
Benignely to January answerd
But first and forward she began to wepe
I haue (q she) a soule for to kepe
As wel as ye, and also myn honour
And of wifehode thilke tender flour
Whiche that I haue ensured in your honde
Whan that the priest to you my body bonde
Wherfore I wol answere in this manere
By the leaue of you my lorde so dere
I pray god that neuer dawe that day
That I ne sterue, as foule as woman may
Yf euer I do to my kinne that shame
Or els that I empayre so my name
That I befalse, and if I do that lacke
Do stripe me, and put me in a sacke
And in the next riuer do me drenche
I am a gentil woman, and no wenche
Why speke ye thus, but men ben euer vntrew
And women haue reprofe of you, aye new
Ye can non other cõmuning, I leue
But speke to vs of vntrust and repreue
And with ỹ word she saw where Damian
Sate in the bushe, and knele he began
And with her finger signes made she
That Damian should climbe vpon a tre
That charged was with frute, & vp he wente
For verily he knewe all her entent
And euery signe that she couth make
Wel bet than January her owne make
For in a letter she had tolde him all
Of this mater, how that he worch shall
And thus I let him sitte in the pery
And January and May roming full mery.
Bright was the day, & blew the firmamẽt
Phebus of gold doun hath his stremes sente
To gladen euery flour with his warmenesse
He was that time in Geminy, as I gesse
But litle fro his declinacion
The causer of Iouis exaltacion
And so befil that bright morow tide
That in the garden, on the farther side
Pluto, that is the king of Fayrie
And many a lady in his company
Folowing his wife, the quene Proserpine
Eche after other right as a line
Whiles she gadred floures in a mede
In Claudian ye may the story rede
How in his grisely carte he her fette
This king of Fayry doun him sette
Upon a benche of turues fresche and grene
And right anon thus said he to his quene.
My wife (q he) that may nat say nay
The experience so proueth euery day
The treason, which that women doth to mã
Ten hundred thousande tel I can
Notable, of your vntrouth and brotelnesse
O Salomon, richest of all richesse
Fulfilde of sapience, and of worldly glory
Full worthy ben thy wordes in memory
To euery wight, that wit and reason can

Thus

Thus praiseth he the bounte of man
Among a thoulande men yet foude I one
But of all women foude I neuer none
Thus saith ỹ king, ỹ knoweth your wicked-
And Iesus Filius Sirach, as I gesse (nesse
Ne speketh of you but selde reuerence
A wilde fire, a corrupt pestilence
So fall vpon your bodies yet to night
Ne se ye not this honorable knight:
Bicause (alas) that he is blinde and olde
His owne man shall maken him cokolde
Lo where he sitte, the lechour in the tre
Now wol I graunt of my maiesse
Unto this olde blinde worthy knight
That he shal haue againe his eye sight
Whan that his wife would done him villany
Than shal he know al her harlotry
Both in repreue of her and other mo.
ye shal (q Proserpine) and woll ye so:
Now be my mothers soule sir I swere
That I shal yeuen her sufficient answere
And al women after for her sake
That though they ben in any gilte itake
With face bolde, they shullen hem selue excuse
And bere hem doun, that wold hem accuse
For lacke of answere, non of hem shull dien
All had he sey a thing with both his eyen
Yet should we women so visage it hardely
And wepe and swere, and chide subtelly
That ye shal ben as leude as gees
What recketh me of your auctorites:
I wot wel this Iewe, this Salomon
Fonde of vs women foles many one
But though he ne fonde no good woman
Yet there hath he fonde many another man
Women ful trewe, full good, & full vertuous
Witnesse of hem that dwell in Christes hous
With martyrdom, they preued her constaunce
The Romain gestes eke make remembraunce
Of many a very true wife also
But sir, be not wroth that it be so
Though that he said he fond no good womã
I pray you take the sentence of the man
He ment thus, that in soueryn bounte
Nys non but god, that sitteth in trinite.
Eye, for very god that nis but one
what make ye so muche of Salomon:
What though he made a tẽple goddes hous:
What though he were riche and glorious
So made he a temple of false goddes
How might he don a thing, ỹ more forbodis
Parde as faire as ye his name emplaster
He was a lechour, and an idolastre
And in his elde, very god forsoke
And if that god nadde (as saith the boke)
yspared him for his fathers sake, he should
Haue lost his reigne soner than he wolde
I set nat of all the villany
That ye of women write, a butterflie
I am a woman, nedes mote I speke
Or els swel, til mine hert breke
For sithen he said, that we ben iangleresses
As euer mote I hole broke my tresses
I shall nat spare for no curtesy
To speke hem harme, that wolde vs villany.
Dame (q this Pluto) be no lenger wrothe
I giue it vp: but sithe I swore myn othe
That I would graunt him his sight ayen
My word shal stand, ỹ warne I you certeyn
I am a king, it set me not to lye.
And I (q she) a quene of Fayrie
Her answere she shall haue I vndertake
Let vs no mo wordes herof make
For soth I wol no lenger you contrary.
Now let vs turne againe to January
That in the garden with this faire May
Singeth merier than the Popingay
You loue I best, and shall, and other non
So long about the aleyes is he gon
Till he was comen ayenst thilke pery
Where as this Damian sitteth ful mery
On hye, among these freshe leues grene
This freshe May, that is so bright & shene
Gan for to like, and said: alas my side
Now sir (q she) for ought that may betide
I must haue of these peeres that I here se
Or I mote die, so sore longeth me
To eten of the small peeres grene
Helpe for her loue that is heuen quene
I tel you wel a woman in my plite
May haue to frute so great an appetite
That she may dyen, but she it haue.
Alas (q he) that I ne had here a knaue
That couth climbe, alas, alas (q he)
For I am blind, ye sir no force (q she)
But would ye vouchsafe for goddes sake
The pery in your armes for to take
For wel I wotte that ye mistrust me
Than should I climbe well ynough (q she)
So I my fote might sette vpon your backe
Forsoth said he, in me shall be no lacke
Might I you helpe with myn hert blode
He stoupeth doun, & on his backe she stode
And caught her by a twist, and vp she goth
Ladies I pray you be not wroth
I can nat glose, I am a rude man
And sodainly anon this Damian
Gan pullen vp the smocke, and in the thrõge
A great tent, a thrifty and a longe
She said it was the meriest fyt

That euer in her life as she was at yet
My lordes tent serueth me nothing thus
It foldeth twifolde by swete Jesus
He may nat swiue worth a leke
And yet he is full gentil and ful meke
This is leuer to me than an euensong
And whan that Pluto saw this wrong
To January he gaue again his sight
And made him se al well as euer he might
And whan he had caught his sight againe
Ne was there neuer man of thing so faine
But on his wife his thought was euer mo
Up to the tree he cast his eyen two
And saw how Damian his wife had dressed
In suche manere, it may not be expressed
But if I would spekе vncurtesly
And vp he yak a roring and a crie
As doth the mother whan the childe shall dye
Out helpe, alas (harowe) he gan to crye
For sorow almost he gan to dye
That his wife was swiued in the pery
O stronge lady store what dost thou?
And she answered: sir what ayleth you?
Haue pacience and reason in your minde
I haue you holpen of both your eyen blinde
Up peril of my soule, I shal nat lien
As me was taught to helpe with your eyen
Was nothing bette for to make you see
Than strogle with a man vpon a tree
God wot I did it in ful good entent
Strogle (quod he) ye algate in it went
Stiffe and rounde as any bell
It is no wonder though thy bely swell
The smocke on his brest lay so thecke
And euer me thought he pointed on ỹ brecke
God giue you both on shames deth to dien
He swiued the, I sawe it with mine eyen
And els I be honged by the halse
Than is (quod she) my medicin falsе
For certain, if that ye might se
Ye would nat say thekе wordes to me
Ye haue some glimsing, and no parfite sight
I se (quod he) as wel as euer I might
Thanked be god, with both mine eyen two
And by my trouth me thought he did so
Ye mase ye mase, good sir (quod she)
This thanke haue I for that I made you se
Alas (quod she) that euer I was so kinde
Now dame (quod he) let all passe out of minde
Come doun my lefe, and if I haue missaide
God helpe me so, as I am yuel apaide
But by my fathers soule, I wende haue seyn
How that this Damian had by the lyen
And that thy smocke had lien vpon his brest
Ye sir (quod she) ye may wene as ye lest
But sir, a man that waketh out of his slepe
He may not sodainly wel taken kepe
Upon a thing, ne se it parfitely
Till that he be adawed verily
Right so a man that longe hath blinde be
Ne may not sodainly so wel yse
First whan the sight is newe comen again
As he that hath a day or two ysain
Till that your sight istabled be a while
There may full many a sight you begile
Beware I pray you, for by heuen king
Ful many a man weneth to se a thing
And it is al another than it semeth
He that misconceiueth ofte misdemeth
And with that worde she lept doun fro ỹ tre
This January, who is gladde but he?
He kisseth her, he clippeth her full ofte
And on her wombe he stroketh her ful softe
And to his paleis home he hath her lad
Now good men I pray you, beth ye al glad
Thus endeth here my tale of January
God blesse vs al, and his mother Mary.

¶ Thus endeth the Marchauntes tale
and here foloweth the wife
of Bathes prologue.

Experience, thoughe none auctorite
were in this worlde, is right ynow for me
To speke of wo that is in marriage
For lordings, sith I twelue yeres was of age
Thanked be god, that is eterne on liue
Husbondes at chirche dore haue I had fiue
If I so ofte might haue wedded be
And all were worthy men in her degre.
But me was tolde not long ago iwis
That sithen Christ went neuer but onis
To wedding, in the cane of Galilee
That by thilke ensample taught he me
That I ne should wedded be but ones.
Lo here, which a sharpe word for the nones
Beside a well, Jesu god and man
Spake in repreue of the Samaritan
Thou hast had fiue husbandes (quod he)
And that ilke man that now hath the
Is not thyn husbonde: thus said he certain
What he ment therby I can not sain
But that I aske a pointe, why the fifte man
Was nat husbonde to the Samaritan
How many might she haue in mariage?
yet herde I neuer tellen in mine age
Upon this numbre trew definicion

Men

Men may deuine, and glosen vp and doun
But wel I wotte expresse without lie
God badde vs for to wexe and multiplie
That gentil text can I well vnderstonde
Eke wel I wote (he said) myn husbonde
Should leaue father & mother, & take to me
But of numbre no mencion made he
Of bigamie or of octogamye
Why shulde men speake of it villany?
Lo he the wise king Salamon
I trow had wiues mo than on
As would god it lefull were to me
To be refreshed halfe so oft as he
Whiche a gifte of god had he, for his wyuis
No mã hath such, that in this world a liue is
God wote this noble king, as to my witte
The first night had many a mery fitte
With eche of hem, so well was him alriue
Blessed be god, I haue had fiue
Welcome the sixte when euer he shall
For soth I will not kepe me chaste in all
When myn husbonde is fro the world ygon
Some christen man shal wedde me anon
For than the apostel saith, that I am fre
To wedde a gode shalle, where it liketh me
He saith, that to be wedded is no sinne
Better is to be wedded than to brinne
What recketh me though folke say villany
Of shrewde Lameth, and of his bigamy
I wote wel Abraham was an holy man
And Jacob eke, as fer as euer I here can
And eche of hem had wiues mo than two
And many another holy man also
Where can you say in any maner age
That euer god defended mariage
By expresse wordes? I praie you tell me
Or where commaunded he virginite?
I wote as well as ye, it is no drede
The Apostel, when he spake of maidenhede
He said, therof precept had he none
Men may counsaile a woman to be one
But counsailing is no commaundement
He put it in our owne iudgement
For had god cõmaunded maidenhede
Then had he dampned wedding out of drede
And certes, if there were no sede ysowe
Virginite than wherof should it growe?
Poule durst not commaund at the leste
A thing, of whiche his master yaf none heste
The darte is set vp for virginite
Catche who so may, who renneth best let se.
But this worde is not taken of euery wight
But there as god list yeue it of his might
I wotte well that the apostel was a mayde
But nethelesse, though that he wrote & saide
He would that euery wight were such as he
All nis but counsaile to virginite
And for to ben a wife, he yaue me leue
Of indulgence, so it be not to repreue
To wedde me, if that my make die
Without excepcion of bigamie
Al were it good no woman for to touche
He ment as in his bedde or in his couche
For peril is, both fire and towe to assemble
Ye know what this ensample may resemble
This is al and some, he held virginite
More parfite than wedding in freelte.
Freelte clepe I, but if that he and she
Would lede her life all in chastite
I graunt it well, I haue none enuye
Though maidenhede preferre bigamye
It liketh hem to be clene in body and goste
Of mine estate I wol make no boste
For well ye knowe, a lord in his houshold
Hath nat euery vessell all of golde
Some ben of tre, and don her lorde seruice
God clepeth folke to him in sondry wise
And eueriche hath of god a proper gifte
Some this, some that, as him liketh shifte
Virginite is great perfeccion
And continence eke with deuocion
But Christe, that of perfeccion is well
Badde not euery wight he should go sell
All that he had, and giue it to the poore
And in suche wise folowe him and his lore
He spake to hem, that would liue parfitly
And lordinges (by your leaue) that am nat I
I wol bestowe the floure of al myn age
In the actes and fruite of mariage
Tell me also, to what conclucion
Were membres made of generacion?
And of so parfite wise a wight iwrought
Trusteth well, they were nat made for nought
Glose who so wol, and saye vp and doun
That they were made for purgacion
Of vrine, and other thinges smale
And eke to knowe a female from a male
And for non other cause, what say ye no?
The experience wotte wel it is not so
So that the clerkes be not with me wrothe
I say that thei were maked for bothe
This is to sayn, for office, and for ease
Of engendrure ther we not God displease
Why should men els in her bokes sette
That man should yelde to his wife her dette
Now wherwith shuld he pay his paiment?
If he ne vsed his sely instrument
Than were they made vpon a creature
To purge vrine, and eke for engendrure
But I say not that euery wight is holde

That hath suche harnesse, as I to you tolde
To gon and bren hem to engendrure
Than should men take of chastite no cure
Crist was a mayde, and shapen as a man
And many a sainte, sithen the world began
yet liued they euer in parfite chastite
I nill enuy no virginite
Let hem with brede of pure whete be fedde
And let vs wiues eate barly bredde
And yet with barly bred, Marke tell can
Our lord Jesu refreshed many a man
In such a state as god hath cleped vs
I wol perseuer, I nam not precious
In wifehode wol I vse myn instrument
As frely as my maker hath it sent
If I be daungerous, god giue me sorow
Myn husbōd shal it haue both euin & morow
When that him list come forth & pay his det
An husbonde wol I haue I wol not let
Which shalbe both my dettour & my thrall
And haue his tribulacion with all
Upon his flesshe, while that I am his wife
I haue the power during al my life
Upon his proper body, and nat he
Right thus the apostle tolde to me
And bad our husbondes for to loue vs well
Al this sentence me liketh euery dell.
Up stert the Pardoner, and that anon
Now dame quod he, by god and by seint John
ye ben a noble prechour in this caas
I was about to wedde a wife, alas
What, should I bye it on my flesshe so dere?
Yet had I leuer wedde no wife to yere
Abide quod she, my tale is not begon
Nay, thou shalte drinke of another ton
Er that I go, shal sauer worse then ale
And when that I haue told forth my tale
Of tribulacion that is in mariage
Of which I am expert in al myn age
This is to say, my selfe hath ben the whippe
Than maist ỹ chese whider thou wolt slippe
Of thilke tonne, that I shal sette abroche
Beware of it, er thou to nere aproche
For I shall tell ensamples mo than ten
Who so wol not beware by other men
By him shal other men corrected be
These same wordes writeth Ptholome
Rede in his almagest, and take it there.
Dame I wol pray you, if your wil were
Said this Pardoner, as ye began
Tel forth your tale, spareth for no man
And teche vs yong men of your practike
Gladly (quod she) if it may you like
But that I pray to al this company
If that I spoke after my fantasy
As taketh not a grefe of that I say
For mine entent is not but to play
Now sirs, than shal I tel forth my tale.
As euer mote I drinke wine or ale
I shal say soth. Tho husbondes that I had
Three of hem were good, and two were bad
The three good men were riche and olde
Unnethes might thei the statute holde
In which they were bounden vnto me
ye wot well what I meane of this parde
As god me helpe, I laugh whan I thinke
How pitously a night I made hem to swinke
But by my fay, I tolde of it no force
They had me yeue her londe and her treasore
Me neded no lenger to do diligence
To winne her loue, and do hem reuerence
They loued me so wel by god aboue
That I ne tolde no deinte of her loue
A wise woman woll bely her euer in one
To get her loue, there as she hath none
But sithen I had hem holly in mine honde
And that they had giue me all her londe
What, should I take hede hem for to please
But if it were for my profite and myn ease
I set hem so a worke by my faie
That many a night they songen wel a waie
The bacon was not fet for hem I trowe
That some men haue in Essex at Dōmowe
I gouerned hem so wel after my lawe
That eche of hem full blisfull was and fawe
To bring me gay thinges fro the fayre
They were ful fain whan I spake hem faire
For god it wot, I chidde hem spitously
Now herkeneth how I bere me properly.
ye wise wiues that can vnderstonde
Thus shul ye speke, and bere hem on honde
For halfe so boldly there can no man
Swere and lye, as a woman can
I say not this by wiues that ben wise
But if it be, whan thei hem misse auise
A wise wife shall, if that she can her goode
Bere hem in honde the cowe is woode
And take witnesse of her owne mayde
Of her assent: but herkeneth how I sayde.
Sir olde keynarde, is this thyn aray
Why is mine neighbours wife so gay?
She is honoured ouer all where she gothe
I sitte at home, and haue no thrifty clothe
What dost thou at myn neighbours house?
Is she so fayre? art thou so amorous?
What rownest thou with our maid? benedicite
Sir olde lechour, let thy iapes be
And if I haue a gossip or a frende
(without gilte) thou chidest as a fende
If that I walke or play vnto his house

Thou

Thou comeſt home as dróken as a Mouſe
And preacheſt on thy benche with iuell preſe
Thou ſaieſt to me, it is a great miſchefe
To wedde a poore woman for coſtage
And if that ſhe be riche of high parage
Than ſaieſt thou, it is a very tourmentrie
To ſuffer her pride and her Melancolie
And if that ſhe be faire, thou very knaue
Thou ſaieſt that euery holour woll her haue
She maie no while in chaſtite abide
That is aſſailed on euery ſide
Thou ſaieſt ſome folke deſiren vs for richeſſe
Some for our ſhape, & ſome for our fairneſſe
And ſome, for ſhe can either ſing or daunce
And ſome for gentilneſſe or for daliaunce
Some for her hondes and her armes ſmale
Thus goeth all to the deuill by thy tale.
Thou ſaiſt men maie not kepe a caſtel wal
It maie ſo long aſſailed be ouer al
And if that ſhe be foule, thou ſaieſt that ſhe
Coueth euery man that ſhe maie ſe
For as a ſpaniell, ſhe woll on him lepe
Til that ſhe find ſome mã that wol her chepe
Ne non ſo graie Goſe goth there in the lake
(As ſaieſt thou) woll been without her make
And ſaieſt, it is a hard thing for to welde
A wight, that no man woll his thonke helde
Thus ſaiſt thou lorell, whã thou goeſt to bed
That no wiſe man nedeth for to wed
Ne no man that entendeth vnto heuin
With wilde thunder dent and fire leuin
Mote thy wicked necke be to broke.
Thou ſaiſt, dropping houſes, and eke ſmoke
And chiding wiues, maken men to flee
Out of her owne hous, ah, Benedicite
What aileth ſoche an old man for to chide?
Thou ſaieſt, we wiues woll our vices hide
Till we be faſt, and than we woll hem ſhewe
Well maie this be a prouerbe of a ſhrewe.
Thou ſaiſt, ỹ oxen, hors, aſſes, and houndes
Thei been aſſaied at diuers ſtondes
Baſins, lauers, er that men hem bie
Spones, ſtooles, and all ſoche hulbondrie
And ſo be pottes, clothes, and araies
But folke of wiues maken non aſſaies
Till thei been wedded, old dotarde ſhrewe
And ſaieſt, how we wol than our vices ſhewe
Thou ſaieſt alſo, that it diſpleaſeth me
But if that thou wilt praiſe my beautie
And but thou poore alwaie on my face
And clepe me faire dame in euery place
And but thou make a feaſt on that ilke daie
That I was borne, & make me freſche and gay
And but thou doen to my norice honour
And to my chamber within my bour
And to my fathers folke, and his allies
Thou ſaieſt thou old barell full of lies.
And yet of our prentiſe Jenkin
For his criſpe heer, ſhining as gold fine
And for he ſquireth me bothe vp and doune
Haſt thou caught a falſe ſuſpeccion
I woll him nat, tho thou wer ded to morowe.
But tel me this, why hideſt thou with ſorowe
The keies of thy cheſt awaie fro me?
It is my good as well as thine parde
What, weneſt ỹ make an idiot of our dame?
Now by that lorde that called is ſainct Jame
Thou ſhalt nat both though thou wer wood
Be maiſter of my body and of my good
That one thou ſhalt forgon maugre thin iyẽ
What helpeth it of me to enquere and ſpien?
I trowe thou wouldeſt locke me in thy chiſt?
Thou ſhouldeſt ſaie: wife, go where you liſt
Take your diſport, I woll leue no tales
I knowe you for a true wife dame Alis
We loue no mã, that taketh kepe or charge
Where that we go, we woll be at our large.
Of al men ibleſſed mote he be
The wiſe Aſtrologien Dan Ptholome
That ſaieth this prouerbe in his almageſt
Of all men his wiſedome is the beſt
That recketh not who hath the world in hõd
By this prouerbe thou ſhalt vnderſtonde
Haue thou inow, what dare the recke or care
How merely that other folke fare
For certes, old dotarde by your leue
Ye ſhall haue queint inow at eue
He is to great a nigarde that woll werne
A man, to light a candle at his Lanterne
He ſhall haue neuer the leſſe light parde
Haue thou inow, thou darſt not plain thee:
Thou ſaieſt alſo, that if we make vs gaie
With clothes, or with precious arraie
That it is perill of our chaſtite
And yet with ſorowe, thou muſt enforcẽ thee
And ſaie theſe wordes in the Apoſtles name
In habite made with chaſtite and ſhame
Ye women ſhould appareile you (ỹ he)
And nat in treſſed heer, and gaie perre
As peerll, ne with gold, ne clothes riche.
After the text, ne after thy rubriche
I nill not worche as moche as a Gnatte
Thou ſaieſt alſo, I was like a Catte
But who ſo would ſenge the Cattes ſkinne
Than would the Catte dwellen in his Inne
And if the Cattes ſkinne be ſlicke and gaie
She nill nat dwell in hous halfe a daie
But forth ſhe woll or any daie be dawed
To ſhewe her ſkin, and gon a Catrewawed
Thus thou ſaieſt, if I be gaie ſir ſhrewe.

I woll ren out, my bozell foz to shewe
Sir old foole, what helpeth thee to spien
Foz though thou plaie Argus with his, c. iyē
To be my wardcoz, as he can best
Unfaith he shall not kepe me but my lest
Yet couth I make his berde, so mote I thee
Thou saiest eke, ỹ there been thinges three
The whiche troublen all this yerth
And that no wight maie endure the ferth
O, lefe sir shrewe, Jesu shozt thy life
Yet preachest thou, & saiest: an hateful wife
I rekened is, foz one of these mischaunces
Been there non other resemblaunces:
That ye make liken your parables to
But if a sely wife be one of tho.
Thou likenest eke, womans loue to hell
To barain londe, there water maie not dwel
Thou likenest it also to wilde fire
The mozе it brenneth, the mozе it hath desire
To consume any thing that brent would be.
Thou saiest, right as wozmes shendē a tre
Right so a wife destroieth her husbonde
This knowen thei that been to wiues bonde
Lozdinges, right thus as ye haue vnderstōd
Bare I stiffely mine old husbonde on honde
That thus thei saiden in her dronkenesse
And all was fals, but as I tooke witnesse
Of Jenkin, and of my nece also
O Lozde the pain I did hem, and the wo
Full giltles by Goddes swete pine
Foz as an hozse, I couth both bite and whine
I couth plain, though I were in the gilt
Oz els often time I had been spilt
Who so first to Mill cometh, first grint
I plained first, and so was our ware islint
Thei were full glad to excusen hem bliue
Of thing, that thei a gilt neuer in her life
Of wenches would I beare hem on honde
Whā that foz sick, vnnethes might thei stond
Yet tickled I his hart, foz that he
Wende I had of him so great cheerte
I swoze, that all my walking out by night
Was foz to espie wenches, that he dight
Under that colour had I moche mirthe
Foz all soche wit, is giuen vs in our birthe
Disceipt, weping, spinning, God hath giue
To women, kindly while that thei liue
And thus of O thing I maie auaunt me
At thende I had the best in eche degre
By sleight oz force, oz by some maner thing
As by continuall murmure oz grutching
Namely a bedde had thei mischaunce
There would I chide, and don no pleasaunce
I would no lenger in the bedde abide
(If I felt his arme ouer my side)
Till he had made his raunsom vnto me
Than would I suffre him to doe his nicete
And therefoze, euery man this tale I tell
Wiue who so maie, all been foz to sell
With empty hōdes men maie no haukes lure
Foz winning would I all his lust endure
And make me than a fained appetite
And yet in Bacon had I neuer delite
That maked me euer that I would hem chide
Foz though the Pope had sitten hem beside
I would not spare hem at her owne bozde
Foz be my truth I quit him wozde foz wozde
As helpe me very God omnipotent
Tho I right now should make my testament
I ne owe hem a wozde, but it is quitte
I brought it so about by my witte
That thei must giue it vp, as foz the best
Oz els had we neuer been in rest
Foz though he looked as woode as a Lion
Yet should he faile of his conclusion.
Than would I saie, good lefe take kepe
How mekely looketh wilken our shepe
Cum nere my spouse, & let me kisse your cheke
Ye should be all pacient and meke
And haue a swete spiced conscience
Sith ye so preache of Jobs pacience
Suffreth al waie, sith ye so well can preache
And but if ye doe, we shall you teache
That it is so faire to haue a wife in pees
One of vs twoo mote obeien doutles
And sith a man is mozе reasonable
Than a woman is, ye must been sufferable
What aileth you to grutche thus and grone:
Is it foz ye would haue me queint alone:
Why take it all: lo, haue it euery dell
Peter I shrewe you, but ye loue it well.
Foz if I would sell my belchose
I couth walke as freshe as any rose
But I woll kepe it foz your owne toth
Ye be to blame by God, I saie you soth
Soche maner wozdes had we on honde
Now woll I speake of my fourth husbonde.
My fourth husbonde was a reuelour
This is to saie, he had a paramour
And I was yong and full of ragerie
Stubburne and strong, and ioly as a Pie
Well coud I daunce, to an Harpe smale
And sing iwis as a Nitingale
Whā I had dronken a draught of swete wine
Metellus, the foule churle the swine
That with a staffe birakt his wife her life
Foz she drōk wine: though I had be his wife
Ne should he not haue daunted me fro drinke
And after wine of Venus must I thinke
Foz also seker, as cold engendzeth haile

A licorus mouth must haue a lecherous taile
In women vinolent is no defence
This knowe lecherous by experience.
But lorde Christ, when it remembreth me
Upon my youth, and my iolite
It tickleth me about the hart roote
Unto this daie it doeth my hart boote
That I haue had my worlde, as in my time
But age alas, that all woll enuenime
Hath me biraft my beaute, and my pith
Let go fare well, the deuill go therwith
The floure is gon, there nis no more to tell
The bran (as I best can) now mote I sell
But yet to be right merie woll I fonde
Now forth to tell of my fourth husbonde.
I saie I had in hart great dispite
That he of any other had delite
But he was quit, by God and sainct Joce
I made hym of the same woode a croce
Not of my body in no foule manere
But certainly, I made folke seche chere
That in his owne grece I made him frie
For anger, and for very iealousie
By God, in yearth I was his purgatorie
For whiche I hope his soule be in glorie
For God it wote, he sat full oft and song
Whan that his shoe full bitterly him wrong
There was none, saue God and he, that wist
In many while, how sore that I him twist
He died whan I came fro Hierusalem
And lieth in graue vnder the Rode beem
All nis his tombe so curious
As was the sepulture of him Darius
Whiche that Appelles wrought so subtelly
It is but wast to burie him preciously
Let him fare wel, god giue his soule good rest
He is now in his graue and in his chest.
Now of my fifth husbonde woll I tell
God let neuer his soule come in hell
And yet was he to me the most shrewe
That fele I on my ribbes all by rewe
And euer shall, vnto mine ending daie
But in our bedde he was so fresshe and gaie
And therewithall, he couth so well me glose
Whan that he would haue my bely chose
That though he had me bete one euery bone
He couth winne ayen my loue anone
I trowe I loued him the better, for that he
Was of his loue so daungerous to me
We women haue, if that I shall nat lie
In this mattere, a queint fantasie
Waite what thing we maie nat lightly haue
Thereafter woll we all daie crie and craue
Forbid vs thing, and that desiren we
Prese on fast, and than woll we flee
With daunger bitten we all our chaffare
Great prees at market maketh dere ware
And to great chepe is hold at to little price
This knoweth euery woman that is wise
My fifth husbonde, God his soule blesse
Whiche I tooke for loue and no richesse
He some tyme was a clerke in Oxenforde
And had left schole, a went at home to borde
With my gossip, dwelling in our toun
God haue her soule, her name was Alisoun
She knewe my hart, and eke my priuite
Better than our parishe prieste so mote I thee
To her bewraied I my counsaill all
For had my husbonde pist against the wall
Or doen a thing, that should haue cost his life
To her, and to an other worthy wife
And to my nece, whiche that I loued well
I would haue told his counsaill euery dell
And so I did full often God it wote
That made his face full oft redde and hote
For very shame, and blamed him oft, for he
Had told to me so great a priuite.
And so befill, that ones in a Lent
So oft time I to my gossip went
For euer yet I loued to go gaie
And for to walke in Marche, Aprill, a Maie
Fro hous to hous, to harken sondrie tales
That Jenkin clerke, and my gossip dame Ales
And I my self, into the fieldes went
My husbonde was at London all that Lent
I had the better laiser for to pleie
And for to see, and eke for to be seie
Of lustie folke, what wist I where my grace
Was shapen for to been, or in what place
Therefore made I my visitacions
To vigilles, and to processions
To preachings eke, and to pilgrimages
To plaies of miracles, and to mariages
And wered on my gaie scharlet gites
These wormes, these moughtes, ne these mites (tes
Upon my parill fret hem neuer a dell
And wost thou why? for they were vsed well
Now woll I tell forthy what happed me
I saie, that in the fieldes walked we
Till truely we had soche daliaunce
This clerke and I, that of my purueiaunce
I speake to him, and saied how that he
If I were wedowe, should wedde me
For certainly, I saie for no bostaunce
Yet was I neuer without purueiaunce
Of mariage, ne of other thinges eke
I hold a Mouses wit not worthy a Leke
That hath but one hole to sterten to
And if that faile, than is all idoe
I bare him on hand he had enchaunted me

My dame taught me forsoth that subtilte
And eke I saied, I met of him all night
He would a slain me, as I laie vpright
And all my bedde was full of very blood
But yet I hope truely he shoul doe me good
For blood betokeneth gold, as I was taught
and al was fals, I dzemed of him right nauzt
But as I folowed aie my dames lore
As well of that, as of other thinges more.
But now sir let me se, what shall I sain
A ha, by God I haue my tale again
Whan that my fourth husbond was on bere
I wept algate, and made sorie chere
As wiues moten, for it is vsage
And with my kerchefe couered my visage
But for that I was purueied of a make
I wept but small, and that I vndertake
To church was my husband born on morow
With neighbours, that for him made sorow
And Jenkin our clerke was one of tho
As helpe me God, whan that I sawe him go
After the bere, me thought he had a paire
Of legges and of feete, so cleane and so faire
That all my hart, I yaue vnto his hold
He was I trowe twentie winter old
And I was fourtie, if that I shall saie sothe
But yet I had alwaie a Coltes tothe
Gaptothed I was, and that became me wele
I had the print of dame Venus seale
As helpe me God, I was a lustie one
And faire, riche, and yong, and well bigone
And truely, as mine husbonde told me
I had the best queint that might be
For certes I am all fully Venerian
In felyng, and my hart is Marcian
Venus me yaue my lust and my licorousnesse
And Mars yaue me my sturdie hardinesse
Min ascendent was Taure, & Mars therein
Alas alas, that euer loue was sin
I followed aie mine inclinacion
By vertue of my constellacion
That made me I couth not withdrawe
My chamber of Venus from a good felawe
Yet haue I Martes marke vpon my face
And also in a nother priuie place
For God so wisely by my saluacion
I loued neuer by no discrecion
But euer followed mine appetite
All were he short, long, blacke, or white
I tooke no kepe, so that he liked me
How pooze he was, ne eke of what degre
What should I saie, but at ỹ monethes ende
This ioly clerke Jenken, that was so hende
Hath wedded me with greate solempnite
And to him yaue I all the londe and fee
That euer was yeuen me here bifore
But afterward repented me full sore
He nolde suffre nothing of my list
By God he smote me ones with his fist
For that I rent out of his booke a lefe
That of that stroke, my eres wer deke
Stubborne I was, as is a Lionesse
And of my tongue a veray iangleresse
And walke I would, as I had doen biforne
Fro hous to hous, although he had it sworn
For which full oft time would he preache
And me of old Romain iestes teache
How he Sulpicius Gallus left his wife
And her forsoke terme of his life
Not but for open hede he her saie
Looking out at his doore on a daie
In other Romain tolde he me by name
That for his wife was at a Sommer game
Without his weting, he forsoke her eke
And than would he vpon his Bible seke
That ilke prouerbe of Ecclesiaste
Wher he commaundeth, and forbiddeth faste
A man shal not suffre his wife go roile about
Than would he saie right thus out of dout
Who so buildeth his hous all of salowes
And pricketh his blind hors ouer the falowes
And suffreth his wife for to seche hallowes
He is worthy to be honged on the gallowes
But all for nought, I set not an hawe
Of his prouerbes, ne of his old sawe
Ne I would not of him corrected be
I hate him that my vices telleth me
And so doe mo (God wote) than I
This made him wode with me all vtterly
I nolde not forbeare him in no caas
Now woll I saie you soth by S. Thomas
Why that I rent out of his booke a lese
For which he smote me, that I was dese
He had a boke, that gladly night and daie
For his disport, he would rede alwaie
He cleped it Valerie, and Theophrast
At which booke he lough alwaie full fast
And eke there was a clerke somtime at Rome
A Cardinall, that hight sainct Jerome
That made a booke ayenst Jouinian
In which booke there was eke Tertulian
Crisippus, Trotula, and Helowis
That was Abbesse nat ferre fro Paris
And eke the parables of Salomon
Ouides art, and bookes many one
And all these were bounden in one volume
And euery night and daie was his custome
(Whan he had leiser and vacacioun
From other worldly occupacioun)
To reden in this booke of wicked wiues

He

He knewe of hem mo legendes and liues
Than been of good women in the Bible
For trusteth well, it is an impossible
That any clerke would speake good of wiues
But if it been of holy sainctes liues
Ne of non other woman neuer the mo
Who peinteth the Lion, tell me who?
By God, if women had written stories
As clerkes han, within her oratories (nesse
They would haue writte of mē more wicked-
Than all the marke of Adam maie redresse
The children of Mercurie and Venus
Been in her working full contrarious
Mercurie loueth wisedome and science
And Venus loueth riot and dispence
And for her diuers disposicion
Eche falleth in others exaltacion
And thus God wote, Mercurie is desolate
In Pisces, where Venus is exaltate
And Venus falleth where Mercurie is reised
Therefore no woman of no clerke is preised
The clerke whan he is old, & maie nought do
Of Venus werkes, not worthe his old shoe
Than sit he doune, and writ in his dotage
That women can not kepe her mariage
But now to purpose, why I told thee
That I was beaten for a booke parde
Upon a night Jenkin, that was our sire
Redde vpon his booke, as he sate by the fire
Of Eue first, that for her wickednesse
Was all mankinde brought to wretchednesse
For whiche ỳ Jesu Christ himself was slain
That bought vs with his hart blood again
Lo here expresse of women maie ye finde
That woman was the losse of all mankinde
Tho rad he me how Sampson lost his heres
Sleping, his leman cut hem with her sheres
Through which treason lost he both his yen
Tho rad he me, if that I shall not lien
Of Hercules, and of his Deianire
That caused him to set himself a fire
Nothing forgat he the care and the wo
That Socrates had with his wiues two
How that Xantippe cast pisse on his hedde
This sely man sat still, as he were dedde
He wiped his hedde, no more durst he sain
But er the thunder stint there cometh rain
Of Paliphae, that was Quene of Crete
For shrewdnesse him thought that tale swete
Fie, speake no more, it is a grisely thing
Of her horrible lust and her liking
Of Clitennestra for her lecherie
That falsely made her husbonde for to die
He rad it with well good deuocion
He told me eke, for what occasion
Amphiaraus at Thebes lost his life
My husbonde had a legende of his life
Eriphilem that for an ouche of gold
Hath priuely vnto the Grekes told
Where that her husbonde hid him in a place
For whiche he had at Thebes sory grace
Of Lima told he me, and of Lucie
Thei bothe made her husbondes for to die
That one for loue, that other was for hate
Lima her husbonde on an euin late
Enpoisoned had, for that she was his foe
Lucia likerous loued her husbonde so
That for he should alwaie vpon her thinke
She gaue him soche a loue maner drinke
That he were dedde, er it were morowe
And thus algates husbondes han sorowe
Than told he me, how one Latumeus
Complained to his felowe Arius
That in his garden growed soche a tree
On whiche (he said) that his wiues three
Hanged himself for hartes despitous
O lefe brother (q this Arius)
yeue me a plant of this blissfull tree
And in my garden planted shall it be
Of later date of wiues hath he redde
That some han slain her husbandes in bedde
And let her lechour dight hem all the night
Whiles that the cors laie in flore vpright
And some had driuen nales in her brain
Whiles thei slepe, & thus thei haue hem slain
Some haue yeue hem poison in her drinke
He spake more harme than hart maie thinke
And therewithall he knewe mo proverbes
Thā in this world ther groweth gras or herbes
Bet is (q he) thine habitacion
Be with a Lion, or a foule Dragon
Than with a woman vsing for to chide
Bet is (q he) high in the roke to abide
Than with an angrie wife doun in an hous
Thei been so wicked and so contrarious
Thei haten, that their husbondes louen aie
He saied, a woman cast her shame awaie
Whan she cast of her smocke: and farther mo
A faire woman, but she be chast also
Is like a gold ring on a Sowes nose
Who could wene, or who could suppose
The wo, that in mine hart was and pine
And whan I sawe he would neuer fine
To reden on this cursed booke all night
All sodainly three leues haue I plight
Out of his booke, right as he radde, and eke
I with my fist so tooke him on the cheke
That in the fire he fell backward a doun
And vp he stert, as doeth a wode Lion
And with his fist he smote me on mine hedde

That

The wife of Bathes tale.

That in the floze I laie as I were dedde
And whan he ſeie how ſtill that I laie
He was agaſt, and would haue fled awaie
Till at the laſt out of my ſwoun I braied
Oh, haſt thou ſlain me falſe theſe I ſaied
For my londe thus haſt thou murdred me?
Er I be dedde, yet woll I ones kiſſe thee
And nere he came, and kneled faire adoun
And ſaied: dere ſuſter, ſwete Aliſoun
As helpe me God I ſhall thee neuer ſmite
That I haue doen it is thy ſelf to wite
Forgeue it me, and that I thee beſeke
And yet eft ſones I hitte him on the cheke
And ſaied: theke, thus mocheam I be wreke
Now woll I die, I maie no lenger ſpeke.
But at the laſt, with mokell care and wo
We fell accorded within our ſelluen two
He yaf me all the bridell in myne honde
To haue the gouernaunce of hous and londe
And of his tongue, and of his honde alſo
And made hem brenne his booke anon tho
And whan I had gotten vnto me
By maiſtrie, all the ſouerainte
Than he ſaied: mine owne true wife
Doe as thou liſt, the terme of all thy life
Kepe thyne honour, and eke mine eſtate
After that daie we had neuer debate
God helpe me ſo, I was to him as kinde
As any wife fro Denmarke vnto Inde
And alſo true, and ſo was he to me
I praie to God, that ſitte in Maieſtie
So bleſſe his ſoule, for his mercie dere
Now woll I ſaie my tale if ye woll here.
The frere lough whā he had heard all this
Now dame (quod he) ſo haue I ioie or blis
This is a long preamble of a tale
And whā the Sompner herd the frere gale
Lo (quod this Sompner) by Goddes armes two
A frere woll entermete him euermo
Lo good men, a flie and eke a frere
Woll fall in euery diſhe and eke matere
What ſpeakeſt thou of preambulacion?
What amble or trot, either peace or ſit a doun
Thou letteſt our diſport in this mattere.
Ye woltthou ſo ſir Sompner (quod the frere)
Now by my faie I ſhall, er that I go
Tell of a Sompner, ſoche a tale or two
That all the folke ſhull laugh in this place.
Now els frere I beſhrewe thy face
(Quod this Sompner) and I beſhrewe me
But if I tell tales two or thre
Of freres, er I come to Sittyngburne
That ſhall make thine hart for to murne
For well I wot thy pacience is goon.
Our hoſte cried peace, and that anoon
And ſaied: let the woman tell her tale
Ye faren as folke, that dronken been of ale
Doe dame, tel forth your tale, and that is beſt
All redy ſir (quod ſhe) right as you leſt
If I haue licence of this worthy frere
Yes dame, tell forth your tale, I woll it here.

Here endeth the wife of Bathes Prologue, and here beginneth her Tale.

IN the olde daies of kyng Artoure
(Of whiche the Bretons ſpeaken great honour)
All was this londe fulfilled of fairie
The Elfe quene, with her ioly companie
Daunſed full oft in many a grene mede
This was the old opinion as I rede
I ſpeake of many an hundred yere a go
But now can no man ſe none elfes mo
For now the great charite and praiers
Of limitours and other holy freres
That ſerchen euery lande and euery ſtreme
As thicke as motes in the Sunne beme
Bliſſing halles, chambers, kichens, & boures
Citees, borowes, caſtelles, and hie toures
Thropes, Bernes, ſhepens, and Deiries
This maketh, that there been no fairies
For there as wont to walke was an Elfe
There walketh now the limitour hymſelf
In vndermeles, and in morwnynges
And ſaieth his Mattins, & his holy thinges
As he goeth in his limitacioun
Women maie go ſafely vp and doun
In euery buſhe, and vnder euery tre
There nis none other incubus but he
And he ne will doen hem no diſhonour.
And ſo fell it, that this kyng Artour
Had in his houſe a luſtie bacheler
That on a daie come ridyng fro the riuer
And happed, that alone as he was borne
He ſawe a maide walkyng him biforne
Of whiche maide anon, maugre her hed
(By very force) he beraft her maidenhed
For whiche oppreſſion was ſoche clamour
And ſoche purſute vnto kyng Artour
That dampned was this knight to be dedde
By courſe of lawe, & ſhould haue loſt his hed
Peraventure ſoche was the ſtatute tho
But that the Quene, and other ladies mo
So long praiden the king of grace
Till he his life graunted in that place

And

And yaue him to the quene, al at her will
To chese where ỹ she wuld him saue or spill
The quene thãketh ỹ king w̃ all her might
And after this, thus spake she to the knight
whan she sey her time on a day.
Thou standeth yet (q̃ she) in such aray
That of thy life yet hast thou no suerte
I graunt the thy life, if that thou cãst tell me
what thing is it, that women most desiren
Beware, and kepe thy necke bone from yren
And if thou canst not tel it me anon
yet wol I yeue the leue for to gon
A twelue moneth and a day, to seke and lere
An answere sufficient in this matere
And suertie wol I haue, er that thou passe
Thy body for to yelde in this place.
Wo was the knight, & sorowfully he siketh
But what: he may not don al as him liketh
And at last he chese him for to wende
And come ayen, right at the yeres ende
with such answer, as god wold him puruay
And taketh his leue, & wẽdeth forth his way
He seketh euery house and euery place
where as he hopeth for to finde grace
To lerne, what thing women louen most
But he ne couth ariuen in no coost
where as he might finde in this matere
Two creatures acordyng yfere
Some said, women loued best richesse
Some said honour, some said iolynesse
Some said riche aray, some said lust a bed
And ofte time to ben widowe and wed
Some said, that our herte is most y esed
whan that we ben flatered and y preised
He goeth ful nye the sothe, I wol not lye
A man shall winne vs best with flaterye
And with attendaunce, and with bulinesse
Ben we ilymed both more and lesse.
And some men sain, how ỹ we louen best
For to ben fre, and do right as vs lest
And that no man repreue vs of our vice
But say that we be wise, and nothing nice
For trewly there nis none of vs all
If any wight wol clawe vs on the gall
That we nil kike, for that he saith vs sothe
Assaye, and he shal finde it, that so dothe
For be we neuer so vicious within
We woll be holden wise and cleane of sin.
And some men sain, ỹ great delite haue we
For to ben holde stable and eke secre
And in o purpose stedfastly to dwell
And nat bewray thing that men vs tell
But that tale is not worth a rake stele
Parde we women can nothing hele
witnesse of Midas, woll ye here the tale?

Ouide, among other thinges smale
Said, Midas had vnder his long heeres
Growing on his heed, two asses eeres
The which vice he hidde, as he best might
Ful subtelly from euery mannes sight
That saue his wife, there wiste of it no mo
He loued her most, and trusted her also
He praied her, that to no creature
She nolde tellen of his disfigure.
She swore him, nat for all ỹ world to win
She nolde do that villany, ne that sin
To makẽ her husbonde haue so foule a name
She nold nat tel it for her owne shame
But natheles, her thought that she dide
That she so long should a counsaile hide
Her thought it swol so sore about her hert
That nedely some word she must a sert
And sith she durst tellen it to no man
Doun to a marris fast by she ran
Til she came there, her hert was on a fyre
And as a bittour bumbeth in the myre
She laid her mouth vnto the water adoun
Bewray me not thou water with thy soun
Quod she, to the I tell it, and to no mo
My husbonde hath long Asses eres two
Now is myn hert al hole, now it is out
I might no lenger kepe it out of dout.
Here mowe ye se, though we a time abide
Yet out it mote, we can no counsaile hide
The remnaunt of the tale, if ye wil here
Redeth Ouide, and there ye may it lere.
This knight, of which my tale is specially
whã that he sawe, he might not come therby
This is to say, what women louen most
within his herte sorouful was his goste
But home he goth, he might not sojourne
The day was come, he must home returne
And in his way, it happed him to ride
In al his care, vnder a forest side
where he sawe vpon a daunce go
Of ladies foure and twenty, and yet mo
Toward the daunce, he drowe him, & ỹ yerne
In hope that some wisdome shoulde he lerne
But certainly, er that he came fully there
Vanished was the daunce, he nist not where
No creature saw he that bare life
Saue in ỹ grene, he saw sitting an olde wife
A fouler wight there may no man deuise
Ageine the knight the olde wife gan arise
And said: sir knight, here forth lieth no way
Tell me what ye seken by your fay
Peraduenture it may the better be
This olde folke conne muche thing (q̃ she)
My lefe mother (q̃ this knight) certaine
I nam but deed, but if that I can saine

What thing it is, that women most desire
Could ye me wisse, I wold quite wel your hire
Plight me thy trouth here in my hād (q̄ she)
The nert thing that I require of the
Thou shalt it do, if it be in thy might
And I wol tel it you, or it be night.
Haue here my trought (q̄ ỹ knizt) I graūt
Than q̄ she, I may me wel auaunt
Thy life is safe, for I wol stonde therby
Upon my life, the quene wil say as I
Let se, which is the prowdest of hem all
That weareth on a kerchefe or a call
That dare say nay, of that I shall you teche
Let vs go forth without lenger speche.
Tho rowned she a pistel in his ere
And bad him to be glad, and haue no fere.
Whā they ben comen to ỹ court, this knizt
Said, he had hold his day, as he hadight
And redy was his answere, as he saide
Ful māny a noble wife, and many a maide
And many a widow, for that they be wise
(The quene her selfe, sitting as a iustise)
Assembled ben, his answere for to here
And afterward this knight was bode apere
To euery wight cōmaunded was silence
And that the knight should tel in audience
What thing that worldly women loued best
This knight ne stode not stil as doth a best
But to his question anon answerde
With manly voice, that al the court it herde
My liege lady: generally, q̄ he
Women desiren to haue souerainte
As well ouer her husbondes as her loue
And for to ben in maistrie hem aboue
This is your most desire, though ye me kill
Doth as you list, I am here at your will.
In al the court nas there wife ne maide
Ne widow, that contraried, that he saide
But said, he was worthy han his life
And with that word, vp sterte the olde wife
Which ỹ the knight fonde sitting on ỹ grene
Mercy (q̄ she) my soueraine lady quene
Er that your court depart do me right
I taught this answere vnto this knight
For which he plight me his trouth there
The first thing I would of him requere
He wold it do, if it lay in his might
Before the court than pray I the sir knight
(Qd she) that thou me take vnto thy wife
For wel thou woste, that I haue kept thy life
If I say falle, say nay vpon thy fay.
This knight answerd, alas and welaway
I wot right wel that such was my beheste
For goddes loue chese a newe requeste
Take al my good, and let my body go.
Nay q̄ she, than I shrewe vs both two
For though that I be foule, olde, and pore
I nolde for al the metall ne the ore
That vnder yerth is graue, or lithe aboue
But if I thy wife were and thy loue.
My loue (q̄ he) nay my dampnacion
Alas that any of my nacion
Should euer so foule disparaged be
But al for nought, the ende is this, that he
Constrained was, ỹ nedes muste he her wed
And taketh this olde wife, and goth to bed.
Now wolden some men say parauenture
That for my negligence, I do no cure
To tellen you the ioye and the array
That at the feast was that ilke day.
To the which thing answere shortly I shal
I say there nas no ioy ne feest at al
There nas but heuinesse and muche sorowe
For prively he wedded her on a morowe
And al day after hidde him as an oule
So wo was him, his wife loked so foule.
Gret was ỹ sorow ỹ knizt had ī his thouzt
Whā he was with his wife a bedde ibrought
He walweth, and turneth to and fro.
His olde wife lay smiling euermo
And said: O dere husbonde, O benedicite
Fareth euery knight thus as ye?
Is this the lawe of king Artours house?
Is euery knight of his loue so daungerouse?
I am your owne loue, and eke your wife
I am she, which that saued hath your life
And certes yet did I neuer you vnright
Why fare ye thus with me the first night
Ye faren like a man that had lost his wit
Fy, what is my gilt? for gods loue tel me it
And it shal be amended if I may.
I mended (q̄ this knight) alas nay nay
That wol not ben amended neuer mo
Thou art so lothly, and so olde also
And therto comen of so lowe a kinde
That litle wōder is thouz I walowe & winde
So would god (q̄ he) mine hert would breste.
Is this (q̄ she) the cause of your vnreste?
Ye certainly q̄ he, no wonder nis.
Now sir (q̄ she) I couth amende al this
If that me list, er it were daies thre
So wel ye might beare you vnto me.
But for ye speke of such gentilnesse
As is discended out of olde richesse
That therfore shullen ye be gentilmen
Such errogaunce is not worthe an hen.
Lo who that is moste vertuous alway
Preuy and aperte, and most entendeth aye
To do the gentil dedes, that he can
Take him for the greatest gentilman.

Crist

Christ would we claimed of hī our gētilnesse
Not of our elders, for our olde richesse
For though they yeue vs all her heritage
For which we claymen to ben of hie parage
Yet may thei not byqueth, for nothing
To none of vs, her vertuous liuing
That made him gentilmen icalled be
And bad vs folowen hem in such degre.
Wel can the wise poete of Florence
That hight Dante, speke in this sentence
Lo in suche maner rime is Dantes tale
Ful selde vp riseth by his braunches smale
Prowesse of man: for god of his goodnesse
Wol that we claime of him our gentilnesse
For of our elders may we nothing claime
But tēporal thing, ỹ men may hurt & maime
Eke euery wight wot this as wel as I
If gentilnes were planted naturally
Unto a certaine linage doun the line
Prely and aperte, than wold thei neuer fine
To done of gentilnesse the faire office
Thei might don no vilany ne vice
Take fire and beare it into the derkest hous
Bitwirt this and the mount Caucasus
And let men shitte the doores, and go thenne
Yet wol the fire as fayre lye and brenne
As twenty thousande men might it beholde
His office natural aye wol it holde
Up peril of my life, till that it dye.
Here may ye se well, how that gentrye
Is not annexed to possession
Sithen folke don not her operacion
Alway as doth the fyre, lo in his kinde
For god it wot, men may ful often finde
A lordes sonne done shame and vilany
And he that wol haue prise of his gentry
For he was borne of a gentil house
And had his elders noble and vertuouse
And nil him selfe don no gentil dedes
Ne folow his gentil auncetre that deed is
He nis not gentil, be he duke or erle
For vilaines, sinful dedes maketh a cherle
For gentilnesse nis but the renomie
Of thine auncetors, for her highe bountie
Which is a strong thing to thy persone
The gentilnesse commeth fro god alone
Than cometh our very gentilnesse of grace
It was nothing biqueth vs with our place.
Thinketh how noble, as saith Valerius
was thilke Tullius Hostilius
That out of pouertie rose to hie noblesse
Redeth Seneck, and redeth eke Boece
There shall ye seen expresse, no drede is
That he is gentile, that doth gentile dedes
And therfore dere husbond, I thus conclude
Al were it that mine auncetors were rude
yet may that hie god, and so hope I
Graunt me grace to liue vertously
Than am I gentil, whan I beginne
To liue vertuously, and leuen sinne.
And there as ye of pouertie me repreue
The hie god, on whom that we bileue
In wilful pouerte chese to lede his life
And certes euery man, maide, and wife
May vnderstonde, Jesu heuen king
Ne would not chese a vicioule liuing.
Glad pouert is an honest thing certaine
This wol Seneck and other clerkes saine
Who so would holde him paide of his pouert
I holde him riche, all had he not a shert
He that coueiteth is a full powre wight
For he wold han, that is not in his might
But he ỹ nought hath, ne coueiteth to haue
Is rich, although ye hold him but a knaue
Very pouert is sinne properly
Juuenal saith of pouert merily
The poore man, whan he goeth by the way
Byforne theues, he may singe and play
Pouert is hatefull good: and as I gesse
A ful great bringer out of busines
A great amender eke of sapience
To him that taketh it in pacience
Pouert is, although it seme elenge
Possession, that no wight wol chalenge.
Pouerte ful often, whan a man is lowe
Maketh his god and eke him selfe to knowe.
Pouert a spectacle is, as thinketh me
Through which one may his very frendes se
And therfore, sin that I you not greue
Of my pouert, no more me repreue.
Now sir eke of elde ye repreued me
And certes sir, though none autorite
were in no boke ye gentils of honour
Saine that men shuld an olde wight honour
And clepe hem father for her gentilnesse
And autours shal I finde, as I gesse.
Now there as ye sain, ỹ I am foule and olde
Than drede you not to ben a cokewolde
For filthe, elthe, and foule, also mote I the
Ben great wardeins vpon chastite
But natheles, sin I know your delite
I shal fulfil your worldly appetite
Chese now (q she) one of these thinges twey
To haue me foule and olde, til that I dey
And be to you a trewe humble wife
And neuer you displease in al my life
Or els wol you haue me yong and faire
And take your auenture of the repayre
That shal come to your house, bicause of me
Or in some other place, may well be?

The Freres Prologue.

Now chese your seluen whether ꝑ you liketh
This knight auiseth him, and sore siketh
But at the laste, he said in this manere:
My lady and my loue, and wife so dere
I put me in your wise gouernaunce
Chese ye your selfe, whiche maye be more plesaunce
And most honour to you & me also
I do no force whether of the two
For as you liketh, it suffiseth me.
Than haue I gote of you ꝑ mastry (q̄ she)
Sin I may chese, and gouerne as my lisse
Ye certes wife (q̄ he) I holde it for the besse
Kisse me (q̄ she) we be no lenger wrothe
For by my trueth, I woll be to you bothe
This is to say, to be bothe fayre and good
I pray to God that I mote sterue wood
But I to you be also good and trewe
As euer was wife, sithen ꝑ world was newe
And but I be to morow as faire to sene
As any Lady, Empresse, or Quene
That is betwene Est and eke the West
Doth with my life right as you lest
Cast vp the courtein, and loke how it is.
And when this knight sawe al this
That she so faire was, and so yonge therto
For ioye hent her in his armes two
His herte bathed in the bathe of blisse
A thousande times a rowe he gan her kisse
And she obeyed him in euery thing
That mought done him pleasure or liking
And thus they liued vnto her liues ende
In parfite ioye: and Jesu Christ vs sende
Husbondes meke, yong, and freshe a bedde
And grace to ouerliue hem that we wedde.
And I pray to God, to shorte her liues
That will not be gouerned by her wiues
And olde, and angry nizardes of dispence
God sende hem sone a very pestilence.

Here endeth the wife of Bathes tale, and here beginneth the Freres Prologue.

This worthye limitour, this noble frere
He made alway a maner louring chere
vpon the Sompner, but for honeste
No vilaynes worde as yet to him spake he
But at the last, he said to the wife
Dame, God yeue you right good life
Ye haue touched here, also mote I the
In scole matter, a full great difficulte
Ye haue said muche thing right wel I saye
But dame, here as we riden by the waie
Vs nedeth not to speken but of game
And lette auctorities a goddes name
To preching, and to schole of clergie.
But if it like vnto this companie
I wol you of a Sompner tell a game
Parde ye maie well knowe by the name
That of a Sompner may no good be saide
I pray, that none of you be yuell apaide
A Sompner is a renner vp and doun
With maundementes, for fornication
And is ybeate at euery tounes ende.
Tho spake our hoste & said: sir ye shuld ben
And curteis, as a man of your estate
In this companie we wol no debate
Telleth your tale, and let the Sompnet be
Nay (q̄ the Sompner) let him say to me
What so him lisse: whan it cometh to my lote
By God I shall him quite euery grote
I shall him tell whiche a great honour
It is, to be a flattering limitour
And eke of many an other maner crime
whiche nedeth nat to reherse en at this time
And of his office I shall him tell ywis
Our hoste answerd: peace, no more of this
And afterwarde he said vnto the frere
Tel forth your tale, mine own maister dere.

Here endeth the Freres prologue, and here after folo-weth his tale.

Vylom there was dwelling in my countre
An Archedeken, a man of hye degre
That boldly dyd execucion
In punishinge of fornicacion
Of witchecraste, and eke of baudrye
Of defamacion, and aduoutrie
Of church reues, and of testamentes
Of contractes and lacke of sacramentes
Of vsery, and of simony also
But certes lecherours dyd he muche wo
They shoulden sing, if they weren hent
And smale tythers they were foule ishent
If any person would vpon hem plaine
There might astert hem no pecunial paine
For small tithes, and smale offringe
He made the people petously to singe
For er the bishop caught hem with his hoke
They were in the archedekens boke
And than had he (through his iurdiction)

Power

Power to done on hem correction
He had a Sompner redy to his honde
A slier boye was there non in Englonde
For subtelly he had his espiayle
That taught him where he might auayle
He couthe spare of lechours one or two
To techen him to foure and twenty mo
For though this sõpner wode wer as an hare
To tell his harlotrye I woll not spare
For we ben out of his correction
They haue of vs no iurdiction
Ne neuer shullen, terme of all her liues.
Peter so ben women of the shrewes.
(Qd this Sompner) yput out of our cure.
Peace with mischaũce & with misauenture
Said our hoste, and let him tell his tale
Now telleth forth and let the Sompner gale
Ne spareth not, mine owne maister dere.
This false theef, this sõpner (q the Frere)
Had alway baudes redy to his honde
As any hauke to lure, in Englonde
That telleth him al the secre that they knew
For her aquaintaunce was nat come a new
They weren his aprouers priuely
He toke him self a great profite therby
His maister knew not alway what he wan
Without maundement, a leude man
He coude sõmon, on paine of christes curse
And they were glad to fillen his purse
And made him greate feestes at the nale
And right as Judas had purses smale
And was a theef: right suche a theef was he
His maister had but halfe his duetie
He was (if I shall yeue him his laude)
A theef, a sompner, and eke a baude.
He had eke wenches of his retinue
That whether sir Roberde, or sir Hue
Or John, or Rafe, or who so that it were
That lay by hem, they tolde it in his eere
Thus were the wenches and he of one assent
And he would fetche a fained maundement
And sommon hem to the chapiter bothe two
And pill the man, and let the wenche go
Than wold he say, frende I shall for thy sake
Do striken the out of our letters blake
Thou dare no more as in this case trauaile
I am thy frende, there I may the auaile
Certaine he knew of bribries mo
Than possible is to tel in yeres two
For in this world nis dogge for the bowe
That can an hurt dere from an hole knowe
Bet than the Sompner knew a sly lechour
Or auouter, or els any paramour
For that was the fruite of al his rente
Therfore on it he sette al his entente.

And so befel that ones on a day
This Sompner waiting euer on his pray
Rode for to sommon an olde wedowe a ribibe
Fayning a cause, for he would haue a bribe
And happed that he saw before him ride
A gay yoman vnder a forest side
A bowe he bare, and arrowes bright & shine
He had vpon him a courtpie of grene
An hatte vpon his heed with stringes blake
Sir q this Sompner, haile and well itake
Welcome q he, and euery good fela we
Whider rydest ꝑ vnder the grene wode shawe
Said this yoman, wolte thou ferre to day?
This Sompner him answerd, and said: nay
Here fast by (q he) is mine entent
To riden, for to reysen vp a rent
That longeth to my lordes duete.
Art thou than a bayle? ye (q he)
He durst nat than, for very filth and shame
Say that he was a Sompner, for the name
Depardieux, q this yoman lefe brother
Thou art a bayly, and I am another
I am vnknowen, as in this countre
Of thine acquaintaunce I wol pray the
And eke of brotherhed, if that thou list
I haue golde and siluer in my chist
Yf that ye happe to come in our shire
All shall be thine, right as thou wolte desire
Graũt mercy q this sompner, by my faithe
Euerich in other his trueth laithe
For to be sworne brethren, til they dey
And with that word they riden forth her wey
This sompner with ꝑ, was as ful of iãgles
As ful of venim, as ben these wariangles
And euer requiring vpon euery thing
Brother q he, wher is your dwelling
Another day, if that I shuld you seche
This yoman him answerd in softe speche
Brother q he, ferre in the North contre
Where as I hope somtime I shall the se
Or we departe, I shall the so well wisse
That of mine house thou shalte neuer misse.
Now brother q the sompner, I you pray
Teche me, while we riden by the way
Sith that ye ben a bayly, as am I
Some subtelte, tel me faithfully
In mine office, how I may most winne
And spareth not for conscience ne for sinne
But as my brother, tel me how don ye
Now by my trouth brother dere, said he
As I shall tellen thee a faithful tale
My wages ben ful straite and smale
My lorde is harde to me and daungerous
And mine office ful labourous
And therfore, by extorcion I leue

Forsoth al that men wol me yeue
Algate by sleyght or by violence
From yere to yere I wyn al my dispence
I can no better tellen faithfully
Now certes (q the sompnour) so fare I
I spare not to take god it wote
But if it be to heuy or to hote
That I may getten in counsayle priuely.
No maner conscience of that haue I
Nere myn extorcion, I might not liuen
Of such iapes wol I not be shriuen
Stomake ne conscience know I non
I shrewe al these shrift fathers euerychon
Wel be we met by god and swet saint Iame
But leue brother, tel me thy name
Q this Sompner in this meane while
This yoman gan a litle for to smile
Brother q he, wolte thou that I the telle
I am a fende my dwelling is in helle
And here I ride about my purchasing
To wete ware I may get any thing
My purchase is theffect of all my rent
Loke how thou ridest for the same entent
To win good, thou rechest neuer how
Right so fare I, for ride wol I now
Vnto the worldes ende for a pray
Ah, q this sompner, benedicite, what ye say
I wende ye were a yoman trewly
Ye haue a mannes shappe as well an I
Haue ye a figure than determinate
In hel, there ye ben in your estate?
Nay certainly q he, there haue we none
But whan vs liketh, we can take vs one
Or els make you seme we ben shape
Somtime like a man or like an ape
Or like an Angel can I ride or go
It is no wonder thing though it be so
A lousy iuggler can disceue the
And parde yet can I more craft than he
Why q ỹ Sompnour, ride ye than or gon
In sondry shappe, and not al way in one?
For we q he, wol vs such forme make
As moste able is our praiers for to take
What maketh you to haue al this labour?
Ful many a cause lefe sir Sompnour
Said this fende, but all thing hath time
The day is shorte, and it is passed prime
And yet ne gote I nothing in this day
I wol entende to winning, if that I may
And nat entende our wittes to declare
For brother mine, thy wittes ben all to bare
To vnderstãde al, though I wold tel hem the
But for thou askest why labouren we
For somtime be we goddes instrumentes
And meanes to done his commaundementes
When that him luste on his creatures
In diuers arte and in diuers figures
Withouten him we haue no might certain
If that him liste to stonden there again
And somtime at our praie haue we leue
Onely the body, and nought the soule to greue
Witnesse of Job, whom we deden wo
And sometime haue we might of bothe two
This is to sain, of body and soule eke
And sometime we ben suffred for to seke
Vpon a man, and don his soule vnrest
And nat his body, and all is for the best
Whan he withstandeth our temptacion
It is a cause of his saluacion
Al be it that it was not oure entent
He should be sake, but that we would him hent
And sometime be we seruauntes vnto man
As the archbishoppe saint Dunstan
And to the apostle eke seruaunt was I
Yet tell me q this Sompnour faithfully
Make ye you newe bodies thus alway
Of elementes? the fende answerde nay
Somtime we fain, and somtime we arise
With deed bodies in sondrie wise
And speke as reuably, faire and well
As the Phitonesse did to Samuell
And yet would some men say it was nat he
I do no force of your deuinite
But o thing I warne the, I wol not Iape
Thou wolt algates wete howe we be shape
Thou shalt herafterward (my brother dere)
Come, where the nedeth not of me to lere
For thou shalt by thine owne experience
Conne in the chare rede of this sentence
Bette than Vergill, while he was on liue
Or Dant also. Now lette vs ride bliue
For I wol holde company with the
Till it be so that thou forsake me
Nay q this Sompnour ỹ shall not betide
I am a yoman knowen full wide
My trouth wol I hold to the, as in this caas
For though thou were the deuill Sathanas
My trouth wol I holde to my brother
As I am swore, and eche of vs to other
For to be trewe brother in this caas
And brother, we gon to our purchaas
Take thou thy parte, that men woll the yeue
And I shal mine, and thus shall we both leue
And if that any of vs haue more than other
Let him be trew, & parte it with his brother
I graunt q the deuill, by my fay
And ẅ that worde they riden forth her way
And right at thentring of the tounes ende
(To which the cõpner shope him for to wẽde)
They saw a carte, that charged was ẅ haye

Whiche

Whiche that a carter droue forth on his waie
Depe was the waie, for whiche the cart stood
This carter smote, & striued as he were wood
Heit scot heit brok, what spare ye for ẏ stones
The fende ꝙ he, you fetche body and bones
As ferforth as euer ye were isoled
So moche wo as I haue for you tholed
The deuill haue al, bothe hors, cart, and haie
ꝙ this Sompner, here shal we haue a pray
And nere the fende he drue, as nought ne wer
Full priuely, and rouned in his ere
Herken brother herken, by thy faith
Hearest thou what the carter saith?
Hent it anon, for he hath yeue it thee
Bothe haie and cart, and eke his caples three
Naie ꝙ the deuill God wotte neuer a dele
It is not his entent trust me wele
Aske him thy self, if thou trowest not me
Or els stint a while and thou shalt se
This carter thacked his hors on the croupe
And thei begon to drawe and to stoupe
Heit now ꝙ he, that Jesus Christ you blesse
And all his hondy werke, both more and lesse
That was well it wight mine own liard boy
I praie God saue the and sainct Loy
Now is my cart out of the slowe parde.
Lo brother ꝙ the fende, what told I thee
Here maie ye seen mine own dere brother
The carle spake o thig but he thouzt another
Let vs go forth about our viage
Here win we nothing vpon cariage
Whan ẏ thei comen, sō what out of the toun
This Sompner to his brother gan to roune
Brother ꝙ he, here wonneth an old rebecke
That had almoste as lefe to lese her necke
As for to yeue a peny of her good
I woll haue.xii.d. tho that she were wood
Or I woll sompne her to our office
And yet God wotte of her I knowe no vice
But for thou canst nat, as in this countre
Winne thy cost, take here ensample of me.
This Sōpner clappeth at ẏ wedowes gate
Come out he saied, thou old veritrote
I trowe thou hast some frere or priest w̄ thee
Who clappeth there said this wife, benedicite
God saue you sir, what is your swete will?
I haue ꝙ he, of sommons of the here a bill
Up pain of cursing looke that thou be
To morowe before our Archdeacons kne
To answere to the court of certain thinges
Now lorde ꝙ she, Jesu king of kinges
So wisely helpe me, as I ne maie
I haue been sicke, and that full many a daie
I maie nat go so ferre, ꝙ she, ne ride
But I be dedde, so pricketh it in my side
Maie I not aske a libell sir Sompnour
And answere there by my proctour
To soche thing as men would apposen me
Yes ꝙ this Sompner, paie anon let se
Twelfe pens to me, and I will the acquite
I shall no profite haue here of but lite
My maister hath the profite and not I
Come of and let me ridden hastely
Giue me.xii.pens I maie no lenger tary
Twelfe pens ꝙ she, lady sainct Mary
So wisely helpe me out of care and sinne
This wide world though I should it winne
Ne haue I nat.xii.d. within my holde
Ye knowe well, that I am poore and olde
Kith your almesse on me poore wretche
Naie than ꝙ he, the foule fende me fetche
If I thee excuse, though ẏ shouldest be spilt
Alas ꝙ she, God wotte yet haue I no gilt
Paie me ꝙ he, or by swete sainct Anne
I woll beare awaie the newe panne
For debt, whiche thou owest me of old
When thou madest thy husbonde cokold
I paied at home for thy correccion
Thou liest ꝙ she, by my saluacion
Ne was I neuer er now, widowe ne wife
Sompned vnto your courte in all my life
Ne neuer I nas but of body trewe
Unto the deuill blacke and rough of hewe
Yeue I thy body and my panne also.
And whan the deuill heard her curse so
Upon her knees, he saied in this manere
Now Mably, mine owne mother dere
Is this your will in earnest that ye seie?
The deuill ꝙ she, fet him er he die
And panne and all, but he woll him repent.
Naie old stotte, that is not mine entent,
Qd this Sompner, for to repent me
For any thing that I haue had of thee
I would I had thy smocke and euery clothe.
Now brother ꝙ the deuill, be not wrothe
Thy body and this panne is mine by right
Thou shalt with me to hell yet to night
Where thou shalt knowen of our priuite
More than a maister of diuinite
And with ẏ word the foule fende him hent
Body and soule, he with the deuill went
Where that Sompners haue their heritage
And God that made after his Image
Mankinde, saue and guide vs and some
And leaue the Sōpner good man to become
Lordinges I coud haue told you, ꝙ this frere
Had I had leiser, of this Sompner here
After the text of Christ, Poule, and Jhon
And of other doctours many one
Soche paines, as your hartes might agrise

The Sompners tale.

Albeit so, that no tongue maie it deuise
Though that I might a thousand winter tel
The peines of that cursed hous of hell
But for to kepe vs from that cursed place
Wake, and praie Jesu of his grace
So kepe vs from the temptour Sathanas
Harkeneth this word, beware as in this caas
The Lion sitteth in his awaite alwaie
To slea the innocent, if that he maie
Dispoleth aie your hartes to withstond
The fend, that thou would make thral & bōd
He maie not tempt you ouer your might
For Christ woll be your champiō and knight
And praieth, that this Sompner him repent
Of his misdeede, er that the fende him hent.

Here endeth the Freres tale, and beginneth the Sōpners Prologue.

THis Sompner in his stirropes hie stoode
Upon this Frere, his hart was so woode
That like an Aspen lefe he quoke for ire
Lordinges (q he) but one thing I desire
I you beleche, that of your curtesie
Sithens ye han heard this false Frere lie
As suffereth me I maie my tale tell
This Frere bosteth that he knoweth hell
And God wote that is little wonder
Freres and fendes been but little a sonder,
For parde, ye han oft time heard tell
How that a Frere rauished was to hell
In spirite ones by a vision
And as an Angell led him vp and doun
To shewe him the paines that there were
In all the place sawe he not a Frere
Of other folke he sawe inow in wo
Unto the Angell spake the Frere tho
Now sir q he, han Freres soche a grace
That none of hem shall come in this place:
Yes q this Angell, many a millioun
And vnto Sathanas ladde he him adoun
And now hath Sathanas soche a taile
Broder than of a Carike is the saile
Hold vp thy taile thou Sathanas (q he)
Shewe forth thine ers, let the Frere se
Where is the nest of Freres in this place
And er that halfe a forlong waie of space
(Right as Bees swarmen out of an Hiue)
Out of the Deuilles ers thei gan driue
Twentie thousande Freres on a rout
And throughout hell swarmed all about
And comen aien, as fast as thei might gon
And in to his ers thei crepten euerichon
He clapt his taile ayen, and laie still.
This Frere, whan he loked had his fill
Upon the turmentes of this sory place
His spirite God restored of his grace
Unto his body ayen, and he awoke
But natheles, yet for fere he quoke
So was the deuilles ers aie in his minde
That is his heritage of very kinde.
God saue you all, saue this cursed Frere
My prologue woll I ende in this manere.

Here endeth the Sompners Prologue, and followeth his Tale.

LOrdinges there is i Yorkshire, as I gesse
A marishe countre called Holdernesse
In whiche there went a Limitour about
To preache, & eke to begge it is no doubt
And so bifell that on a daie this frere
Had preached in a churche in his manere
And specially abouen euery thing
Exited he the people in his preaching
To trentals, and to yeuen for Goddes sake
Wherwith men mighten holy houses make
There as diuine seruice is honoured
Not there as it is wasted and deuoured
Ne there it nedeth not for to be yeuen
As to possessioners that mowen els leuen
Thonked be God, in wele and haboundaunce
Trentals deliuereth (q he) fro penaunce
Her frendes soules, as well old as yong
If that thei be hastely isong
Not for to hold a Priest ioly and gaie
(He signeth not but one Messe a daie)
Deliuereth out (q he) anon the soules
Full hard it is with flesche hoke or with oules
To bee iclawed, or to brenne or bake
Now spedeth you hastely for Christes sake.
And when this Frere had said al his entēt
With qui cum patre, forth his waie he went
Whā folk in church had yeue him what hē lest
He went his waie, no lenger would he rest
With scrip and tipped staffe, itucked hie
In euery hous he gan to pore and prie
And begged meale and chese, or els corne
His felowe had a staffe tipped with horne
A paire of tables all of Iuorie

And

I pointell polished ketouslie
And wrote alwaie the names as he stood
Of all folke, that yaue hem any good
Ichaunce as he would for hem preie
yeue vs a bushell Wheate, Malte, or Reie
I Goddes kichell, or a trippe of Chese
Or els what ye list, I maie not chese
I Goddes halfpenie, or a Masse peny
Or yeue vs of your Brawne, if ye haue any
I dagon of your blanket, leue dame
Our suster dere, lo here I write your name
Bacon or Beke, or soche thing as ye finde
A sturdie harlot went him aie behind
That was her hostes man, and bare a sacke
And that men yaue hem, laied it on his backe
And whan he was out at the doore anon
He plained awaie the names euerichon
That he before had written in his tables
He serued hem with nisles and with fables.
Naie there thou liest Sompner (q ỳ Frere)
Peace (q our hoste) for Christes mother dere
Tell forth thy tale, and spare it not at all.
So thriue I (q the Sompner, so I shall.
So long he went fro hous to hous till he
Came to an hous, ther as he was wont to be
Refreshed more than in an hundred placis
Sicke laie the good man, whose the place is
Bedred vpon a couche lowe he laie
Deus hic (q he) O Thomas frend good daie
Saied this Frere, curtesly and soft
Thomas God yeld it you, full oft
Haue I vpon this benche faren full weale
Here haue I eaten many a mery meale
And fro the benche he droue awaie the Catte
And laied adoune his potent and his hatte
And eke his scrip, and set him soft adoune
His felawe was go walked in to the toune
Forth with his knaue, into that hostelrie
Where as he hope him that ilke night to lie.
O dere maister, (q this sicke man
How haue ye faren sithen March began
I sawe you nat this fourtenight and more.
God wote (q he) laboured haue I full sore
And specially for thy saluacion
Haue I saied many a precious orison
And for our other frendes God hem blesse
I haue this day been at your church at messe
And said a sermon, after my simple wit
Not all after the text of holy writ
For it is hard to you, as I suppose
And therfore I woll teache you all the glose
Glosing is a glorious thing certain
For letter slaeth, as we clerkes sain
There haue I hem taught to been charitable
And spend her good there as it is reasonable
And there I sawe our dame, a where is she?
Yonder in the yarde I trowe she be
Saied this man, and she woll come anon
Eie maister welcome ye be by sainct Jhon
Saied this wife, how fare ye hartely?
This Frere ariseth vp full curtesly
And her embraceth in his armes narowe
and kisseth her swetly, a chirketh as a sparow
with his lippes, dame (q he) right wele
As he that is your seruaunt euery dele
Thãked be God, that you haue soule and life
yet sawe I not this daie so faire a wife
In all the churche, so God saue me
ye God amende all faultes sir (q she)
Algates welcome ye be, by my faie
Graunt mercie dame, ỳ haue I found alwaie
But of your greate goodnesse, by your leue
I woll praie you, that ye not you greue
I woll with Thomas speake a little throwe
These curates been full negligent and slowe
To gropen tenderly a mannes conscience
In shrift, and in preaching is my diligence
And to studie on Peters wordes and Poules
I walke to fiche christen mennes soules
To yelde Jesu Christ his proper rent
To sprede his wordes, is all mine entent.
Now by your leue dere maister (q she)
Chideth him well for sainct Charite
He is aie angrie as a pisse mire
Though that he haue all that he can desire
Though I hi wrie a night, & make hi warme
And ouer him laie my legge or mine arme
He groneth like our bore that lieth in the stie
Other disport of him right none haue I
I maie not please him in no maner caas.
O Thomas, ie vous die, Thomas Thomas
This maketh ỳ fend, this must been amended
Ire is a thing that God highly defended
And therof woll I speake a worde or two
Now maister (q the wife) er that I go
What woll ye dine? I woll go there about.
Now dame (q he) ie vous die sanz dout
Haue I not of a Capon but the liuer
And of your white bread, but a shiuer
And after that a rosted Pigges hedde
(But I nolde not for me no beast were dedde)
Than had I inow for my sustisaunce
I am a man of little sustenaunce
My spirite hath his fostring in the Bible
My bodie is aie so redy and so penible
To wake, that my body is distroide
I praie you dame, be ye nought anoide
Though I so frendly you my counsaile shew
By God, I nolde haue told it but a fewe
Now sir (q she) but one worde er you go

The Sompners tale.

My child is dedde, within these wekes two
Some after that ye went out of this toun
His death sawe I by reuelacioun
Saied this frere, at home in our Dortour
I dare well sain, er that halfe an hour
After his death, I sawe him borne to blisse
In mine auision, God me so wisse
So did our Sexten, and our Fermerere
That han been true Freres this fiftie yere
Thei maie now, God be thanked of his lone
Waken her Jubelie, and walken alone
And vp I arose, and all our couent eke
With many a teere trilling on our cheke
Withouten noise or clattering of belles
Te deum was our song, and nothing elles
Saue that to Christ I saied an orison
Thanking him of my reuelacion
For sir and dame, trusteth me right well
Our orisons been more effectuell
And more we seen of Christes secret thinges
Than worell folke, although thei wer kinges
We liue in pouerte, and in abstinence
And worell folke in richelle and dispence
In meate and drinke, and in her foule delite
We han this worldly lust all in dispite
Lazar and Diues, liueden diuersely
And diuers guerdons had thei thereby
Who so woll praie, he must fast and be cleane
And fatte his soule, and make his body leane
We fare as saieth the Apostle, clothe and food
Sufficeth vs, though thei be not full good
The clennesse and the fasting of vs Freres
Maketh that Christ accepteth our praiers.
Lo Moises, fourtie daies & fourtie night
Fasted, er that the hie God of his might
Spake with him in the mount of Sinai
With emptie wombe, fasting many a daie
Receiued he the lawe, that was written
With Gods finger, and Hely well ye witten
In mount Oreb, er he had any speche
With the high God, that is our soules leche
He fasted long, and was in contemplaunce.
Aaron, that had the tẽple in gouernaunce
And eke the other priestes euerichone
Into the temple whan thei should gone
To praien for the people, and doen seruice
Thei nolde drinke in no maner wise
No drinke, that dronke might hem make
But there in abstinence praie and wake
Lest that thei deiden, take hede what I saie
But thei be sobre that for the people praie
Ware that I saie, no more for it sufficeth
Our Lorde Jesu, as holy writte deuiseth
Yaue vs ensample of fasting and praiers
Therefore we Mendicantes, we sely Freres
Been wedded to pouert and continence
To charite, humblenesse, and abstinence
To persecucion for rightwisnesse
To weping, misericorde, and clennesse
And therefore maie ye se that our praires
(I speake of vs mendicant, we Freres)
Been to the hie God more acceptable
Than yours, with your feast at your table.
Fro Paradise first, if I shall not lie
Was man chased out for his glotonie
And chast was man in Paradise certain
But herken now Thomas what I shall sain
I haue no text thereof, as I suppose
But I finde it in maner of a glose
That specially our swete Lorde Jesus
Spake this by Freres, whan he saied thus
Blessed be thei that poore in spirite been
And so forth all the Gospell maie ye seen
Whither it be liker our perfeccion
Or hers that swimmen in possession
Fie on her pompe, and on her glotonie
And in her leudnesse, I hem defie
Me thinketh thei been like Jouinian
Fat as a whale, and walking as a Swan
As vinolent as botell in the spence
Her praier is of full little reuerence
Whã thei for soules saie the psalme of Dauid
Lo bouffe thei sain (Cor meum eructauit)
Who foloweth Christes Gospell & his lore
But wer that humble be, chaste, and poore
Werkers of Gods worde, and not auditours
Therefore right as an hauke at a sours
Up springeth in to the eire, so praires
Of charitable and chast busie Freres
Maken her sours to Gods eares two
Thomas Thomas, so mote I ride or go
And by that lorde that cleped is sainct Yue
Ne ỹ our broder were, ỹ shouldest not thriue
For in our Chapitre praie we daie and night
To Christ, that he thee sende health & might
Thy body for to welden haskely
God wote ꝙ he, nothing therof fele I
As helpe me Christ, as in fewe yeres
Haue I spended vpon diuers maner Freres
Well many a pound, yet fare I neuer the bet
Certain my good haue I almoste beset
Farewell my good, for it is almoste ago.
The Frere answered, o Thomas doest ỹ for?
What nedeth thee diuers Freres seche?
What nedeth him that hath a parfite leche?
To sechen other leches in the toun
Your inconstaunce is your confusioun
Hold ye me than, or els our couent
To praien for you insufficient?
Thomas, that iape nis not worth a Mite

your maladie is for we haue to lite
I,yeue that couent half a quarter Otes
And yeue that couent four and twētie grotes
And yeue that Frere a pennie,and let him go
Naie naie Thomas,it maie nothing be so
What is a farthing worth parted in twelue:
Lo,eche thing that is oned in him selue
Is more strong, than whan it is so shattered
Thomas,of me thou shalt not been iflattered
Thou wolst haue all our labour for nought
The hie God,ỹ all this worlde hath wrought
Saith,that the workman is worthy his hire
Thomas,naught of your treasour I desire
As for my self,but that all our couent
To praie for you is aie so diligent
And for to builden Christes owne chirche
Thomas,if ye woll learne for to wirche
Of building vp of chirches maie ye finde
If it be good,in Thomas like of Inde.
Ye liggen here full of angre and of ire
With which ỹ diuell setteth your hart on fire
And chiden here this holy innocent
your wife,that is so meke and pacient
And therefore trowe me Thomas if you lesse
Ne chide not with thy wife,as for the besse
And beare this worde aware by thy faithe
Touching soche thing,lo what ỹ wise saieth
Within thy house be thou no Lion
To thy subiectes doe thou none oppression
Ne make not thine acquaintaunce to sle
And yet Thomas,eftsones charge I thee
Beware of her that in thy bosom slepeth
Ware thee of the serpent,that so slily crepeth
Under the grasse,and stingeth full subtelly
Beware my soonne,and herken paciently
That twēty thousand men han lost her liues
For striuing with her lemmans & her wiues
Now sens ye haue so holy and meke a wife
What nedeth you Thomas to make strife:
There nis iwis no serpent so cruell
(Whan men treden on his taile) ne half so fel
As a woman is,whā she hath caught an ire
Vengeaunce is than all her desire.
Ire is a sinne,one of the greatest of seuen
Abhominable vnto the high God of heuen
And to himself it is a distruccion
This euery leude Vicare and Parson
Can saie,how ire engendreth homecide
Ire is in sothe the executour of pride
I could of ire saie so moche sorowe
That my tale should last till to morowe
And therefore I praie God bothe day & night
That to an irous man he sende little might
It is greate harme,and eke greate pitee
To set an irous man in hie degree.

Whilom there was an irous potestate
As saieth Seneke,that during his estate
Vpon a daie out ridden knightes two
And as fortune would it should be so
That one of hem came home,ỹ other nought
Anon the knight before the iude is brought
That said thus: thou hast thy felowe slain
For whiche I deme thee to the death certain
And to an other knight commaunded he
Go lede him to the death I charge thee
And happed as thei went by the weie
Toward the place, there he should deie
The knight came, which mē wend had be ded
Than thought thei it was the best rede
To lede hem bothe to the Judge again
Thei saiden lorde,the knight hath not slain
His felowe,here he stant hole aliue.
Ye shullen be dedde (q̄ he)so mote I thriue
That is to saie,bothe one,twoo,and three
And to the first knight,right thus spake he.
I dampned thee,thou must algate be dedde
And thou must also lese nedes thine hedde
For thou art cause why thy felowe dieth
And to the third knigh,right thus he saieth
Thou hast not don that I commaunded thee
And thus he did hem slean all three.

Irouie Cambises was eke dronkelewe
And aie delited him to been a shrewe
And so bifell,a lorde of his meine
That loued well vertuous moralite
Saied on a daie bitwixt hem two right thus
A lorde is lost,if he be aught vicious
And dronkennesse eke is a foule record
Of any man, and namely of a lorde
There is many an ye and many an eere
Awaiting on a lorde,he not where
For Goddes loue drinketh more temperatly
Wine maketh a man to lese wittedly
His minde, and his limmes euerichone.
The riuers shalt thou se (q̄ he) anone
And preue it by thine owne experience
That wine ne doeth to folke no soche offence
There nis no wine bireueth me my might
Of honde, of foote, ne of mine ye sight
And for dispite he dronke mochell more
An hundred times than he did before
And right anon, this cursed irous wrecche
Let this knightes soonne bifore him fetche
Cōmaunding him he shuld bifore him stond
And sodainly he tooke his bowe in honde
And vp the string he pulled to his eere
And w̄ an arrowe he slough the child there.
Now whither haue I a siker hond or none
Quod he? Is all my might and minde agone?

Hath

Hath wine bireuen me mine iyen sight:
What shuld I tell the answer of the knight
His sonne was slain, there is no more to saie
Beware therefore, with lordes how ye plaie
Sing Placebo, and I shall if I can
But if it be vnto a poore man
To a poore man, one should his vices tell
But not to a lord, though he should go to hel

Loirous Cirus, thilke Percien
How destroied he the riuer of Gisen:
For that an hors of his was dreint therein
Whan he went Babilon to winne
He made that the riuer was so small
That men might ride and waden ouer all
Lo, what saied he, that so well teache can
Ne be no felowe to none irous man
Ne with no wode man walke by the waie
Lest thou repent, I woll no farther saie
Now Thomas leue brother, leaue thin ire
Thou shalt me finde as iust, as is a squire
Hold not the diuels knife aie in thine harte
Thine anger doeth thee all to sore smarte
But shewe to me all thy confession.
Naie (q the sicke man) by sainct Simon
I haue be shriue this daie of my Curate
I haue told him all mine estate
It nedeth no more to speake of it, saieth he
But if me list, of mine humilite.
Yeue me thā of thy gold, to make our cloister
q he, for many a muckle and many an Oister
Whan other men haue been full well at ease
Hath been our foode, our cloister for to rese
And yet God wot, vnneth the foundament
Parformed is, ne of our pauement
Is not a tile yet within our wones
By God we owen fourtie pound for stones
Now helpe Thomas, for him ẏ harowed hell
For els mote we our bookes sell
And if you lacke our predicacion
Than goeth this worlde all to destruccion
For who so woll fro this worlde vs bireue
So God me saue, Thomas by your leue
He would bireue out of this worlde the sonne
For who can techen a worchen as we conne
And that is not of little time (q he)
But sith Helie was, or Helise
Han Freres been, that finde I of recorde
In charite, ithonked be our Lorde
Now Thomas, for sainct charite
And doune anon he sitteth on his kne.
This sicke man worse nie woode for ire
He would the frere had been a fire
With his false dissimulacion
Soche thinges as been in my possession
(q he) that maie I giue, and none other
Ye sain me thus, how ẏ I am your brother
Yes certes (q this Frere) trusteth me wele
I tooke our dame our letter and our sele
Now (q he) well, and somwhat shal I yeue
Unto your holy couent, while I liue
And in thine honde, thou shalt it haue anone
On this condicion, and other none
That thou depart it so, my leue brother
That euery frere, haue as moche as other
This shalt thou sweare on thy profession
Without fraude or cauelacion.
I swere it (q the frere) by my saieth
And therewithall his honde in his he laieth
Lo here my faithe, in me shall be no lacke.
Than put thine honde doune by my backe
Saied this man, and grope well behinde
Bineth my buttocke, there thou shalt finde
A thing that I haue hid in priuite
Ah, thought the frere, that shall go with me
Adoune he shofth his hande to the clift
In hope to finde there some good gift
And whan this sicke man felt this frere
About his towell, groping here and there
Amid his honde, he let the frere a farte
There nis no capell, drawing in a carte
That might haue let a farte of soche a soun
The frere vp start, as doeth a wode Lion
A false churle (q the frere) for Goddes bones
This hast thou in dispite doe, for the nones
Thou shalt abie this farte, if I maie
His meinie, that heard of this affraie
Came leping in, and chased out the frere
And forth he goeth, with a ful angrie chere
And fet his felowe, there as laie his store
He looked as he were a wilde Bore
He grinted his tethe, so was he wroth
A sturdie pace doune to the Court he goth
Wher as there wōned a man of great honour
To whom that he was alwaie confessour
This worthy man, was lorde of that billage
This frere came, as he were in a rage
Where as this lorde sat eating at his borde
Unnethes might the frere speake O worde
Till at the last he saied, God you se
This lorde gan looke, and saied Benedicite
What frere Jhō, what maner worlde is this
I see well that somthing is a mis
Ye loke as though ẏ wodde wer full of theuis
Sit doune, and tell me what your griefe is
And it shall be amended, if that I maie
I haue (q he) had a dispite to daie
God yelde it you, adoune in your billage
That in this worlde, is none so poore a page
That he nolde haue abhominacioun

Of that I haue receiued in your toun
And yet me greueth nothing so sore
As that the olde churle, with lockes hore
Blasphemed hath our holy couent ehe.
Now maister(q̄ this lord) I you beseke
No maister sir(q̄ he)but seruitour
Though I haue had in schole that honour
God liketh not,that men vs Raby calle
Neither in market,ne in your large halle.
No force(q̄ he)but tell me of your grefe.
Sir(q̄ this Frere)an odious mischefe
This day is betide,to mine ordre,and to me
And so per consequens to eche degre
Of holy churche,God amende it sone.
Sir(q̄ the lord)ye wot what is to done
Distemper you not,you ben my confessour
Ye ben the salte of the erth,and the sauour
For goddes loue your pacience now holde
Telleth me your grefe:and he anon him tolde
As ye han herd byfore,ye wot wel what
The lady of the house,aye still sat
Til she had herde what the Frere saide.
Eye gods mother(q̄ she)& blisfull maide
Is there nought els,tel me faithfully
Madame(q̄ he)how thinketh ye therby
How that me thinketh:so God me spede
I say a churle hath done a churles dede
What should I say,God let him neuer the
His sicke heed is ful of vanite
I holde him in a maner of frenesie.
Madame(q̄ he)by God I shal not lye
But I in any wise may ben on him a wreke
I shal saunder him ouer al,where I speke
That falsе blasphemour that charged me
To parte it,that might not departed be
To euery man iliche,with mischaunce.
The lord sat still,as he were in a traunce
And in his hert he roled vp and doun
How that this churle had imaginacioun
To shewe such a probleme to the Frere
Neuer erst or now ne herde I such a matere
I trowe the Diuel put it in his minde
In al Arsmetrike there shal no man finde
Byfore this day,of suche a question
Who should make a demonstracion:
That euery man should haue ilyke his parte
Of a sowne or sauour of a farte
O nice proude churle,I shrewe thy face.
Lo sirs(q̄ the lord)with hard grace
Who euer herde of suche a thing or now:
To euery man ilike, tell me how:
It is an impossible,it may not be
Eye nice churle,God let hem neuer the
The rombling of a farte,and euery soun
Nys but of eyre reuerberacioun
And euer it wasteth litel and litel away
There is no man can demen,by my fay
If that it were departed equally
What:lo my churle:lo,yet how shrewdly
Vnto my confessour to day he spake
I holde him certaine a demoniake.
Now eteth your meate, & let ỹ churle go play
Let him go hongen him selfe a Diuel way.
Now stode the lordes squier at the borde
That carfe his meate,& herd word by word
Of all thing,of whiche I haue you saide
My lord (q̄ he)be not yuell apaide
I couthe tel for a gowne clothe
To you sir frere,so that ye ben not wrothe
How that this farte should euen ideled be
Amonges your couent,if it liketh the.
Tel on(q̄ ỹ lord)and thou shalt haue anon
A gowne clothe,by God and by sainte John
My lord(q̄ he)whan ỹ the weder is faire
Withouten winde,or perturbing of ayre
Let bring a carte whele here into this hall
But loke he haue his spokes all
Twelue spokes hath a carte whele cōmenly
And bring me than.xii.freres, wote ye why?
For thirtene is a couent as I gesse
Your confessour here,for his worthinesse
Shal perfourme vp the nombre of his couent
Than shullē they knelen adoun by one assent
And to euery spokes ende,in this manere
Full sadly lay his nose shall a Frere
Your noble confessour there,God him saue
Shal holde his nose vpright vnder the naue
Than shal this churle, with bely stiffe & tought
As any tabour,hither ben ibrought
And set him on the whele, right of this carte
Vpon the naue,and make him let a farte
And ye shullen se,vp perill of my life
By preue,whiche is demonstratife
That equally the soune of it wil wende
And eke the stinke, vnto the spokes ende
Saue that this worthy man your cōfessour
(Bycause he is a man of great honour)
Shal haue the first frutes,as reson is
The noble vsage of freres yet is this.
The worthest man of hem shall first be serued
And certainly,he hath it well deserued
He hath to day taught vs so moche good
With preching in the pulpet there he stood
That I may vouchesafe, I say for me
He had the first smell of fartes thre
And so wolde al his brethren hardely
He bereth him so faire and holyly.
The lord, ỹ lady, & eche man, saue the Frere
Said that Ienken spake in this matere
As wel as Ouide did or Ptholome

Touching the churles saide subtilte
And hie wit made him speke as he spake
He nis no foole, ne no demoniake
And Jenken hath iwonne a newe goune
My tale is done, we ben almost at toune.

¶ Here endeth the Sompners tale, and here foloweth the clerkes of Oxenfordes Prologue.

Ir Clerke of Oxford, our host saide
ye ride as still and coye, as doth a maide
Were newe spoused, sitting at the borde
This daye ne herde I of your mouth a worde
I trowe that ye study aboute some sophime
But Salomon saith, al thing hath time
For goddes sake, bethe of better chere
It is no time now to studie here
Tell vs some mery tale by your fay
For what man is entred into a play
He nedes mote vnto that play assent
But precheth not, as Freres done in lent
To make vs for our olde sinnes to wepe
Ne that thy tale make vs not to slepe.
Tel vs some mery thing of auentures
Your termes, your figures, & your coloures
Kepe hem in store, til so be that ye endite
High stile, as whan men to kinges write
Speketh so plaine at this time, I you pray
That we may vnderstonde what ye say.
This worthy Clerke benignly answerde
Host (quod he) I am vnder your yerde
Ye haue of vs as now the gouernaunce
And therfore wol I do you obeysaunce
As farre as reason asketh hardely
I woll you tell a tale, whiche that I
Lerned at Padow, of a worthy Clerke
As preued is by his wordes and his werke
He is now deed, and nailed in his chiste
I pray to God sende his soule good reste.
Fraunces Petrarke, the laureat poete
Hight this clerke, whose Rhetorike swete
Enlumined all Italie of poetrie
As Liuian did of Philosophie
Or la we, or other arte particulere
But deth that wol not suffre vs dwellen here
But as it were the twinkling of an eye
Hem both hath slaine, and all we shal dye.
But for to tellen of this worthy man
That taught me this tale, as I first began
I say that he first with hie stile enditeth
(Or he the body of his tale writeth)
A proheme, in which discriueth he
Piemount, and of Saluce the countre
And speketh of Apēnuy the hilles hye
That ben the boundes of west Lumbardie
And of mount Vesulus in special
Where as the Poo, out of a wel small
Taketh his first spring and his cours
That estwarde euer increseth in his cours
To Emelle ward, to Ferare, and to Venise
The which a long time were to deuise
And truely, as to my iudgement
Me thinketh it a thing impartinent
Saue that him list conuey his matere
But this is his tale as ye shullen here.

¶ Here endeth the prologue of the Clerke of Oxforde, and here foloweth his tale.

Here is, in the west side of Italie
Doun at the rote of Vesulus the colde
A lusty plaine, habundaunt of vitaile
Where many a toun and tour thou maist beyold
That founded were, in time of fathers olde
And many another delectable sight
And Saluces, this noble countre hight.

A Marques whilom was in that londe
As were his worthy elders him before
And obeysaunt aye redy to his honde
Were all his lieges, bothe lesse and more
Thus in delite he liued, and hath done yore
Beloued & drad, through fauour of fortune
Both of his lordes, and of his commune.

Therwith he was, as to speke of linage
The gentilest iborne of al Lomberdy
A faire person, and strong, and yonge of age
And ful of honour and curtesy
Discrete inow, his countre for to gye
Saue in some thinges he was to blame
And Walter was this yong lordes name

I blame him thus, that he cõsidred nought
In time comming, what him might betide
But on his lust present was all his thought
And for to hake and hunt on euery side
Wel ny all other cures let he slide
And eke he ne would, that was worst of all
Wedde

wedde no wife, foz ought that might befall

Onely that pointe his people bare so soze
That flockmele on a day to him they went
And one of hem, that wisest was of loze
(Oz els that the lorde wolde best assent
That he should tel him what his people ment
Oz els coude he shewe suche matere)
He to the Marques said, as ye shullen here.

O noble Marques, your humanite
Assureth vs, and yeueth vs hardinesse
As ofte time as is necessite
That we may to you tell our heuinesse
Accepteth lord of your gentilnesse
That we to you with pitous hert plaine
And let your eares nat my voice disdaine.

All haue I not to done in this matere
Moze than another hath in this place
Yet foz as muche, as ye my lord so dere
Haue alway shewed me fauour and grace
I dare the better aske of you a space
Of audience, to shewen our requeste
And ye my lord to done right as you leste.

Foz certes lord: so wel vs liketh you
And al your werkes, that euer haue don, that we
He could our own selfe deuisen how
We might moze liuen in felicite
Saue one thing lord, if it your wil be
That foz to be a wedded man, you lest
Thā wer your people in souerain hertes rest.

Boweth your necke vnder the blissful yoke
Of souerainte, and not of seruise
which men clepen spousaile oz wedlocke
And thinketh lord, amōg your thouztes wise
How that our daies passen in sondry wise
Foz though we slepe oz wake, ronne, oz ride
Aye fleeth the time, it wol no man abide.

And though your grene youth floure, as yet
In crepeth age alway as still as stone
And deth manaseth euery age, and smyte
In eche estate, foz there escapeth none
And also certain, as we knowen echone
That we shul dye, and vncertaine we all
Ben of that day, that dethe shall on vs fall

Accepteth than of vs the trewe entent
That neuer yet refused your heste
And we wol al lorde, if ye wol assent
Chese you a wife in shorte time, at the lest
Borne of the gentillest and of the best
Of all this londe, so that it ought seme
Honour to god & you, as nere as we can deme

Deliuer vs out of al this busy drede
And take a wife, foz hie goddes sake
Foz if it so befell, as god forbede
That thorow deth, your linage should slake
And that a straunge successour should take
your heritage, O wo were vs on liue
Wherfoze we pray you hastely to wiue.

Her meke praier and her pitious chere
Made the Marques foz to haue pite
Wol ye (q he) mine owne people dere
To that I neuer erst thought, constraine me
I me reioiced of my liberte
That selden time is founde in mariage
There I was free, I mote ben in seruage.

But natheles, I se your true entente
And trust vpon your wit, and haue done aye
Wherfoze of my fre will I woll assente
To wedden me, as sone as euer I may
But there, as ye haue profred me to day
To chese me a wife, I you release
That choice, and praie you of that profer tese

Foz God it wote, that children ofte been
Unlike her worthy elders, hem before
Bounte cometh al of God, & not of the streen
Of which thei ben engendred and ibore
I trust in goddes bounte, and therfoze
My mariage, mine estate, and rest
I him betake, he may don as him lest.

Let me alone in cheling of my wife
That charge vpon my backe I wol endure
But I you pray, and charge vpon your life
That what wife I take, ye me ensure
To worship her, whiles her life maie dure
In worde and werke, here and els where
As she an Emperours doughter were

And furthermoze, thus shall ye swere, ȳ ye
Ayenst my choice shall neuer grutch ne striue
Foz sithe I shal forgo my liberte
At your requeste, as euer mote I thriue
There as mine hert is set, there wol I wiue
And but ye woll assent, in soche manere
I pray you speketh no moze in this matere.

With herty will thei swozne and assent
To all this thing, there said no wight nay
Beseching him of grace er thei went
That he would hem graunt a certaine day

Of his spousaile, as soone as euer he may
For yet alway the people somwhat dredde
Lest this Marques wolde no wife wedde.

He graunted hem a day, suche as him lest
On which he wold be wedded seuerly
And said he did all this at her request
And thei with humble entent ful buxumly
Kneling vpon her knees ful reuerently
Him thonked all, and thus thei han an ende
Of her entent, and home ayen thei wende

And here vpon he tolde his officers
Commaunding for the feest to purueay
And to his priuy knightes and squiers
Suche charge yaue, as he liste on hem lay
And thei to his commaundement obey
And eche of hem doth his diligence
To don to the feest reuerence.

Explicit prima pars, & sequitur pars secunda.

Dught ferre fro thilke
place honorable
Where this Markes shope
his mariage
There stode a thrope, of
sight ful delectable
In whiche poore folke of
that village
Hadden her beestes and herbigage
And of her labour tolde her sustenaunce
After that the erthe yaue hem habundance

Among this pore folke, there dwelled a man
Whiche that was holden poorest of hem all
But hye god somtime sende can
His grace vnto a litel ore stall
Janicola men of that thrope him call
A doughter had he, faire ynoughe to sight
And Grisilde this yonge maiden hight.

But for to speke of vertuous beaute
Than was she one the fairest vnder sonne
And full poorely ifostred was she
No likerous lust was in her hert ironne
Wel ofter of the wel than of the tonne
She dronke, and for she would vertue plese
She knewe wel labour, but not idle ese.

But though this maide were tender of age
Yet in the brest of her virginite
There was enclosed, sadde and ripe corage
And in great reuerence of charite
Her olde poore father fostred she
A fewe sheepe spinning on the feld she kept
She would not ben idle til she slept.

And whē she homward came, she wold brig
Wortes and herbes, times ful ofte
Whiche she shradde and sethe for her liuing
And made her bed ful harde, & nothing softe
And aye she kept her fathers life on lofte
With euery obeisaunce and diligence
That child might do to the fathers reuerēce

Upon Grisilde the poore creature
Well ofte hath the Marques set his eye
As he an hunting rode parauenture
And when it fell, that he might her aspie
He (not with wanton loking of folie)
His eyen cast vpon her, but in sadde wise
Upon her chere, he would him ofte auise.

Cōmending in his hert her womanhede
And eke her vertue, passing euery wight
Of so yong age, as well in chere as in dede
For though the people haue no great insight
In vertue: he considered full right
Her bounte, and disposed that he would
Her wedde, if he euer wedde should.

The day of wedding com, but no wight can
Tell, what woman it should be
For which meruaile, wondred many a man
And saiden, whan thei were in her priuite
Woll not our lord yet leaue his vanite
Woll he not wedde, alas alas, the while
Why woll he thus himselfe and vs begile.

But natheles this Marques hath do make
Of gemmes, set in golde and in asure
Broches and ringes, for Grisildes sake
And of her clothing, take he the mesure
Of a maiden like to her stature
And eke of other ornamentes all
That to soche a wedding should fall

The time vndren, in the same day
Approched, that the wedding should be
And all the paleis put was in array
Bothe halle and chambre, eche in his degre
Houses of office stuffed with great plente
There maist thou se all dainteous vitaile
That may be founde, as fer as lasteth Itaile

This royall Marques, richely araide
Lordes and ladies in his companie
The whiche that to the feest were praide

And

And of his retinue the bachelerie
With many a soune of sondrie melodie
Unto the village, of whiche I tolde
In this aray, the right way hath holde

Grisilde (God wote of this full innocent
That for her was shape all this aray)
To fetche water at a well went
And cometh home as sone as euer she may
For wel she heard say, that ilke day
That the Marques shuld wed, & if she might
She would faine seen some of that sight.

She thought: I wold wt other maidens stonde
That ben my felowes in our doore and se
The Marques, and therto wol I fonde
To don at home, as sone as it may be
The labour, whiche that longeth to me
And than may I at leyser it beholde
If she the way to the castel holde.

And as she would ouer the threshholde gon
The Marques came, and gan her for to call
And she sette doun her water potte anon
Beside the threshholde of the oxe stall
And doun vpon her knees she gan to fall
And with sadde countenaunce she kneled still
Til she had herd what was the lordes will

This thoughtful Marques spake to ỹ maide
wel soberly, and said in this manere
Where is your father Grisilde, he said?
And she with reuerence and mekechere
Answered, lord he is al redy here
And in she goeth, without lenger lette
And to the Marques she her father sette

He be the honde than toke this olde man
And said thus, whan he had him aside
Janicola, I neither may ne can
Lenger the plesaunce of mine hert hide
If that thou vouchesafe, whatsoeuer betide
Thy doughter wol I take, or that I wende
As for my wife, to my liues ende.

Thou louest me, I wot wel certaine
And art my faithfull liegeman ibore
And al that liketh me, I dare well saine
It liketh the, and specially therfore
Tel me that point, that I haue said before
If that thou wolt to this purpose drawe?
To take me for thy sonne in lawe.

This sodaine case, the man astoned so
That reed he wext abashed, and al quaking
He stode, ne vnneth said he wordes mo
But only thus (q he) lorde my willing
Is as ye wol, ne ayenst your liking
I woll nothing, ye be my lord so dere
Right as you list, gouerne this matere.

Than wol I thus (q this Marques) softely
That in thy chambre, I, you, and she
Haue a collation, and wotest thou why?
For I wol aske her, if her wil be
To be my wife, and rule her after me
And al this shal she done in thy presence
I wol not speke out of thine audience

And in the chambre, while thei were about
The treties, whiche ye shall after here
The people came into the house without
And wondred hem, in how honest manere
So tentifly she kept her father dere
But vtterly Grisilde wonder might
For neuer erst saw she suche a sight.

No wonder is though she be astoned
To se so great a gest come in to that place
She was neuer to suche gestes woned
For whiche she loked with ful pale face
But shortly fro this mater for to pace
These weren the wordes ỹ the Marques said
To this benigne and very faithfull maid

Grisilde he said, ye shall well vnderstonde
It liketh vnto your father and me
That I you wedde, and eke it may so stonde
As I suppose, that ye wol that it so be
But these demaundes I aske first (q he)
That sithen it shal be done in hasty wise
Wol ye therto assent, or els you auise.

I say thus, be ye redy with good herte
To all my lust, and that I frely may
As me best liketh, though ye laugh or smerte
And neuer ye to grutche, night ne day
whan I say yea, that ye say not ones nay
Neither ī worde, ne by frowning cōtenaūce
Swere this, and here I swere our alliaunce.

Wondring vpon these wordes, quaking for
She said: lord, indigne & vnworthy (drede
Am I, to thilke honour that ye me bede
But right as you wol, so wol I
And here I swere, that neuer willingly
In word, werke, ne thought, I nil you disobie
For to be deed, though me were loth to die.

This is inough Grisilde mine (q he)

And forth he goth with a lowre chere
Out at the dore, and after came she
And to the people, he said in this manere
This is my wife, (quod he) that stondeth here
Honoureth her, and loueth her, I you pray
Who so me loueth, there nis no more to say.

And for that nothing of her olde gere
She should bring in to his house, he badde
That womē should dispoilen her right there
Of whiche these ladies were nothing gladde
To hādle her clothes, in whiche she was clad
But natheless, this maiden bright of hewe
Fro fote to heed thei clothed han all newe.

Her heer han thei kembed, ꝑ lay untressed
Ful rudely, and with her fingers smale
A croune on her heed thei han idressed
And sette it ful of ouches great and smale
Of her array, what should I make a tale
Unneth the people her knew for her fayrnesse
Whan she transformed was in such richesse

This Marques hath her spoused ẅ a ringe
Bought for the same cause, and then her set
Upon an horse snowe white, wel amblinge
And to his paleis, or he lenger let
With ioyfull people, that her ladde and met
Conueyed her, and thus the day they spende
In reuell, til the sonne gan discende

And shortely forth this tale for to chace
I say, that to his newe Marquesse
God hath sent suche fauour of his grace
That it semed not, as by her liuelinesse
That she was borne and fedde in rudenesse
As in a cote, or in an ore stall
But norished in an Emperoures hall.

To euery wight, she woren is so dere
And worshipful, ꝑ folk ther as she was bore
And fro her birthe, knew her yere by yere
Unneth trowed thei, but durst haue swore
That to Janicola, of whiche I spake before
She doughter nas, for as by coniecture
Hem thought she was another creature.

For thoughe that euer vertuous was she
She was encreased in suche excellence
Of thewes good, set in hie bounte
And so discrete, and faire of eloquence
So benigne, and digne of reuerence
And coude the peoples heartes so enbrace
That eche her loued that loked in her face.

Not onely of Saluce in the toun
Published was the bountie of her name
But eke beside, in many a regioun
If one saide well, an other said the same
So spradde of her bountie the fame
That men and women, bothe yong and olde
Gone to Saluces her to beholde.

This walter lowly, and full royally
Wedded hathe with fortunate honeste
In gods peace: liueth ful easely
At home, and outward grace inough had he
And for he sawe that vnder lowe degre
Was honest vertue hid, the people him held
A prudent man, and that is seene well selde.

Not onely this Grisilde, through her wit
Couthe al the feate of wifely humblesse
But eke, whan the case required it
The comen profite could she redresse
There nas discorde, rancour, ne heuinesse
In al the londe, that she ne couthe apese
And bring hem all wisely in rest and ese

Though her husbonde absent were or none
If gentilmen, or other of her contre
Were wrothe, she would bring hem at one
So wise and ripe wordes had she
And iugement of so great equite
That she from heuen sent was, as men wende
People to saue, and euery wrong to amende.

Not long time after this Grisilde
Was wedded, she a doughter had ibore
Al had she leuer haue borne a man childe
Glad was ꝑ Marques and his folke therfore
For though a maide childe came al before
She may to a man childe attaine
By likelihode, sithens she is not baraine.

Explicit secunda pars, & incipit pars tertia.

Here fell, as it befalleth
oft times mo
whā that this childe had
sucked but a throwe
This Marques in his hert
longed so
To tempt his wife, her
sadnesse to knowe
That he ne might out of his herte throwe
This merueylous desire, his wife to assaye
Nedelesse God wot, he thought her to affray

He

He had assaied her inough biforе
And fonde her euer good, what nedeth it
Her for to tempt? And alwaie more and more
Though some man praise it for a subtill wit
But as for me, I saie full euill it sit
To assaie a wife, whan that it is no nede
And put her in anguishe and in drede.

For whiche this Marques wrought i this ma-
He came alone a night ther as she laie (nere
With sterne face, and right vgly chere
And saied thus: Grisilde (q he) that daie
That I tooke thee out of thy poore araie
And put thee in estate of hie noblesse
Thou hast not that forgoten, as I gesse.

I saie Grisilde, the present dignite
In whiche I haue put thee, as I trowe
Maketh not thee foryetfull for to be
That I thee tooke in poore estate full lowe
For any wele, thou must thy self knowe
Take hede of euery worde what I saie
There is no wight that hereth but we twaie.

Thou wotest thy self, how ỹ thou cam here
Into this hous, it is not long ago
And though to me thou be both lefe and dere
Unto my gentils thou art nothing so
Thei saie, to hem it is greate shame and wo
For to been subiect, and been in seruage
To thee, that borne art in so smale a village.

And namely sith thy doughter was iborе
These wordes haue thei spoken doubtles
But I desire, as I haue doen beforе
To liue my life with hem, in rest and pees
I maie not in this case be recheles
I mote doen with thy doughter, for the best
Not as I would, but as my gentils lest.

And yet God wote, this is full loth to me
But natheles without thy witting
I woll nought doe, but this I woll (q he)
That thou to me assent, as in this thing
Shewe now thy pacience, in thy werking
That thou me hight and swore in our village
That daie that maked was our mariage.

whan she had heard all this, she not ameued
Neither in word, in chere, ne in countenaūce
For as it semed, she was not agreued
She saied lorde, all lieth in your pleasaunce
My child and I, with hartely obeisaunce
Been yours all, and ye maie saue or spill
With your owne, worketh your owne will.

There maie nothing, so God my soul saue
Liken to you, that maie displease me
Ne I desire nothing for to haue
Ne drede for to lese, saue onely ye
This will is in my harte, and aie shall be
No length of time, or death it maie deface
Neither chāge my corage into an other place

Glad was the Marques of her answering
But yet he fained as he were not so
All drery was his chere, and his looking
whan that he should out of the chamber go
Sone after this, a forlong waie or two
He priuely had told all his entent
Unto a man, and to his wife him sent

In maner of a sergeant was this priuy man
The whiche he faithfull oft found had
In thinges great, and eke soche folk well can
Doen execucion of thinges bad
The lorde knewe well, he him loued and drad
And whan this sergeant wist his lordes will
Into the chamber he stalked him full still.

Madame he saied, ye mote foryeue it me
Though I do thing, which I am constrained
ye be full wise, and full well knowe ye
That lordes hestes maie not be fained
Thei maie well be wailed and complained
But men must nedes unto her lust obaie
And so woll I, there nis no more to saie.

This child I am commaunded to take
And spake no more, but vp the child he hent
Dispitously, and gan a chere to make
As though he would haue slain it or he went
Grisilde must all suffer, and consent
And as a lambe, she sitteth meke and still
And let this cruell Sergeant doe his will.

Suspect was the fame of this man
Suspect his face, suspect his worde also
Suspect the time in whiche he this began
Alas her doughter, that she loued so
She wende he would haue slain it right tho
But natheles, she neither wept ne sihed
Confirming her to that the Marques liked.

But at the last to speake she began
And meekely she the Sergeant praide
(So as he was a worthy gentell man)
That she might kisse her child er that it deide
And in her barme, this little child she leide
With full sad face, and gan the child kisse

And lulled it, and after gan it kisse.

And thus she saied in her benigne voice
Farwell my child, I shall thee neuer see
But sithen I haue marked thee with ỹ croice
Of thilke father iblisſed mote thou bee
That for vs died vpon the Roode tree
Thy soule little child, I him betake
For this night shalt thou dien for my sake.

I trowe that to a norice in this caas
It had been harde, this routh for to se
Well might a mother than crie alas
But natheleſſe, so sad and stedfast was she
That she endured all her aduersite
And to the Sergeant mekely she saied
Haue here ayen your little yong maide.

And goth now (q she) & doth my lordes hest
And o thing would I praie you of your grace
But if my lorde forbid it you at the leſt
Burieth this little body in some place
That no beaſtes ne birdes it to race
But he no worde to that purpose would saie
But toke the child and went anon his waie.

This Sergeaunt came to the lorde again
And of Grisildes wordes, and of her chere
He told him worde by worde, short and plain
And him presented with his doughter dere
Somwhat this lord had routh in his maner
But natheleſſe, his purpose held he still
As lordes doen, whan thei woll haue her wil

And badde the sergeaunt that full priuely
He should this child well soft wind & wrappe
With all the circumstaunce tenderly
And carie it in a coser, or in a lappe
But on pain of his hedde of to swappe
That no man should knowe of his entent
Ne whens he came, ne whither he went.

But at Boleine, to his suster dere
That thilke time of Pauie was Countesſe
He should it take, and shewe her this matere
Beseching her to doen her buſinesſe
This child to fostre in all gentelnesſe
And whose child that it was, he bad her hide
From euery wight, for ought ỹ might betide

This sergeãt goth, & hath fulfilled this thing
But to this Marques now retourne we
For now goeth he full oft imagining
If by his wiues chere, he might se
Or by her wordes, perceiue that she
were chaunged, but he neuer could finde
But euer in one ilike sadde and kinde.

As glad, as humble, as buſie in seruage
And eke in loue, as she was wont to be
Was she to him, in euery maner wise
Ne of her doughter one worde spake she
None accident, for none aduersite
Was seen in her ne neuer, her doughters name
Nempned she, for ernest ne for game.

Explicit tertia pars, et incipit pars quarta.

In this estate, passed been four yere
Er she with childe was, but as God would
A man child she bare by this Walter
well gracious, and faire to behold
And whan folke it to the father told
Not onely he, but all the countre mery
Was for the child, & God thei thonke & hery.

whan it was two yere old, and frõ the brest
Departed from his norice on a daie
This Marques cought yet an other lest
To tempten his wife eft sones, if he maie
O nedeles was she tempted, I dare well saie
But wedded men ne conne no measure
whan thei finde a pacient creature.

wife (q this Marques) ye haue herd or this
My people heuely beareth our mariage
And namely sithen my sonne borne is
Now is it worse than euer in our age
The murmure slaeth my hart and my corage
For to my eres cometh the voice so smart
That it well nie destroied hath my hart.

Now saie thei thus, whan Walter is agon
Than shall the blood of Janicola succede
And been our lorde, for other haue we non
Soche wordes saie my people, it is no drede
Well ought I of soche murmure take hede
For certainly I drede soche sentence
Though thei not plainly speke i min audiẽce

I would liue in peace, if that I might
wherfore I am disposed vtterly
As I his suster serued by night
Right so I thinke to serue him priuely
Thus warne I you, that ye not sodainly
Out of your self, for no wo should outraie
Beth pacient, and therof I you praie.

I haue (q̃ she) saied, and euer shall
I woll ne nill nothing certain
But as you list: nought greueth me at all
Though ẏ my doughter & my soonne be slain
At your commaundement: this is to sain
I haue had no part of children twain
But first sicknesse, and after wo and pain.

Ye been our lorde, doth w̃ your own thing
Right as you list, and taketh no rede of me
For as I left at home my clothing
Whan I came first to you, right so (q̃ she)
Left I my will, and all my liberte
And toke your clothing: wherfore I you pray
Doe your will, I woll to it obaie.

And certes, if I had prescience
Your will to knowe, er ye your lust me told
I would it doen, without negligence
But now I wote your lust, & what ye would
All your pleasaunce, firme and stable I hold
For wist I that my death would doen you ese
Gladly would I suffer it you to plese.

Death maie make no comparisoun
Unto your loue: and whā this Marques saie
The constaunce of his wife, he cast adoun
His iyen twoo: and wondred how she maie
In soche pacience, suffereth all this arraie
And forth he goth, with drery countenaunce
But to his hart, it was full great pleasaunce

This eiger Sergeaunt, in thesame wise
That he her doughter caught, right so he
Or worse, if he coud wers deuise
Hath hent her sonne, that was full of beaute
And euer in one so pacient was she
That she no chere made of heuinesse
But kisseth her child, and after gan him blisse

Saue this she praied him, if that he might
Her little sonne he would in yearth graue
His tender limmes, delicate to sight
Fro foules and fro beastes to saue
But she none answere of him might haue
He went his waie, as he nothing rought
But to Boleine he tenderly it brought.

This Marques wondred euer lēger ẏ more
Upon her pacience, and if that he
Ne had sothly knowen there before
That parfitly her children loued she
He would haue wende, that for some subtelte
And of malice, or cruell corage
That she had suffred this with sad visage.

But he knewe well, ẏ next himself certain
She loued her children best, in euery wise
But now of women would I aske fain
If these assaies might not suffise
What coud a sturdie husbonde more deuise
To preue her wifehode, and her stedfastnesse
But be continuyng euer in sturdinesse.

But there be folke of soche condicion
That whan thei han a certain purpose take
Thei couth not stint of her intencion
But as thei were bounden to a stake
Thei woll not of that purpose slake
Right so this Marques, hath fully purposed
To tempt his wife, as he was first disposed.

He waiteth, if by wordes or countenaunce
She were to him chaunged of corage
But neuer could he finde variaunce
She was aie in one hart and visage
And euer the further that she was in age
The more truer (if it wer possible)
She was to him in loue, and more penible.

For which it semeth thus, that of hem two
There nas but one will: for as Walter lest
Thesame lust was her pleasaunce also
And God be thonked, all fell for the best
She shewed well, for no worldly vnrest
A wife, as for her self, nothing should
Willen in effect, but as her husbonde would.

The sclannder of Walter, wonder wide sprad
That of cruell harte, full wretchedly
(For he a poore woman wedded had)
Hath murdred bothe his children priuely
Whiche murmure was emong hem comonly
No wonder was: for to the peoples ere
Ther came no word, but ẏ thei murdred were

For which, there as his people there bifore
Had loued him wel, disclaūdred of his defame
Made hem, that thei hated him therfore
To been a murtherer is an hatefull name
But nathelesse, for earnest ne for game
He of his cruell purpose would not stent
To tempt his wife, was all his entent.

Whan ẏ his doughter, xii. yere was of age
He to the court of Rome, in subtell wise
(Enformed of his will) sent his message
Commaunding hem, soche billes to deuise
As to his cruell purpose maie suffise
How that the Pope, for his peoples rest
Bad him wedde an other, if that him lest.

I saie he bad, thei should counterfete
The Popes bulle, making mencion
That he hath leue, his first wife to lete
As by the Popes dispensacion
To stint rancour and discencion
Betwirt his people & him, thus spake the bul
The whiche thei han published at the full.

The rude people, as no wonder nis
Wenden full well, it had been right so
But whan these tidinges come to Grisildis
I deme, that her hart was full wo
But she was leche sadde euermo
Disposed was this humble creature
The aduersite of fortune to endure.

Abiding euer his lust and his pleasaunce
To whom she was yeuen, hart and all
As to her worldly sufficiaunce
But certainly, if I this storie tell shall
This Marques i writen hath in speciall
A letter, in whiche he shewed his entent
And priuely, he it to Boloine sent.

To the Erle of Pauie, whiche that had tho
Wedden his suster: he praied specially
To bringen him ayen his children two
In honourable estable all openly
But one thing he him praied all utterly
That he to no wight, thouz men wold enquere
Should tellen whose children thei were.

But saie that the maidē should wedded be
Unto the Marques of Saluce anon
And as the Erle was praied, so did he
For at a daie iset, he on his waie is gon
Toward Saluce, and lordes many one
In riche araie, this maiden for to gide
Her yong brother riding by her side.

Araied was toward her mariage
This maiden freshe, full of gemmes clere
And her brother, that seuen yere was of age
Araied was eke freshly in his manere
And thus in great nobles and glad chere
Toward Saluce, shapen her iournaie
Fro daie to daie, riding forth her waie.

Explicit quarta pars, et sequitur pars quinta.

Fully to haue experience and lore
If that she were as stedfast (as before)
He on a day in open audience
Ful boistously hath said her this sentence.

Certes Grisild, I had inough of pleasaūce
To han you to my wife, for your goodnesse
And for your trouth, and your obeysaunce
Not for your linage, ne for your richesse
But I now know in very sothfastnesse
That in great lordship, if I me wel auise
There is great seruitude in sondry wise.

I may not done, as euery ploughman may
My people me constraineth for to take
Another wife, and crien day by day
And eke the pope this rancoure for to slake
Consenteth it, that dare I undertake
And truely, thus much I wol you say
My new wife is coming by the way.

Be strong of hert, & voide anon her place
And thilke dowery that ye brought to me
Take it ayen, I graunt it of my grace
Returneth to your fathers house (q he)
No man may alway haue prosperite
With euen herte, I rede you to endure
The stroke of fortune, or of auenture.

And she ayen answerd in pacience:
My lord (q she) I wote and wille alway
How that bitwixt your magnificence
And my pouert, no man can ne may
Maken no comparison, it is no nay
I helde me neuer digne in no manere
To ben your wife, ne yet your chamberere

And in this house, there ye me lady made
(The hie God take I, as for my witnesse
And al so wisely, as he my soule glad)
I helde me neither lady ne maistresse
But humble seruaunt to your worthinesse
And euer shal, while my life may endure
Abouen euery worldly creature

That ye so long of your benignite
Haue holde me in honour and nobley
(where I was not worthy for to be)
That thonke I God & you, to whom I prey
So yelde it you, there is no more to sey
Unto my father gladly wol I wende
And with him dwell to my liues ende

There I was fostred of a childe ful small
Til I be deed, my life there wol I lede

Fōg al this, after his wicked vsage
This Marques his wife yet to tempten more
(To the utterest profe of her corage

A widowe clene in herte, body and all
For sithen I yaue to you my maydenhede
And am your trew wife, it is no drede
God shilde suche a lordes wife to take
Another man, to husbonde or to make.

And of your new wife, God of his grace
So graunt you welth and high prosperitie
For I wol gladly yeue her my place
In which I was blisful wont to be
For sithen it liketh you my lorde (quod she)
(That whilom weren al my hertes rest)
That I shal gon: I shal go whan you lest.

But there as ye me profred such dowayre
As I first brought, it is wel in my minde
It were my wretched clothes, nothing faire
The which to me now were ful hard to finde
Oh, good god: how gentil and how kinde
Ye semed by your speche and your visage
The day that maked was our marriage.

But sothly is said, algate I finde it trewe
For in effecte it is proued now on me
Loue is not olde, as whan it is newe
For certes lord, for none aduersite
To dien in this case, it shal neuer be
That euer in word or worke I shal repent
That I you yaue mine hert in good entent

My lord ye wote, that in my fathers place
Ye did me stripe out of my poore wede
And richely ye clad me of your grace
To you brought I naught els out of drede
But faith, nakednesse, and maidenhede
But here ayen your clothing I restore
And eke my wedding ringe for euermore

The remnaunt of your iewels redy be
Within your chambre, dare I safely saine
Naked out of my fathers house (quod she)
I came: and naked I mote turne againe
Al your pleasaunce would I folow faine
But yet I hope it be not your entent
That I smocklesse out of your paleis went

Ye coulde not do so dishonest a thing
That ilke wombe in whiche your childe lay
Shulde before the people, in my walking
Be sene al bare: wherfore I you pray
Let me not like a worme go by the way
Remembreth you mine owne lord so dere
I was your wife, though I vnworthy were

Wherfore in rewarde of my maidenhede
Which I to you brought, and not ayen bere
As vouchesafe to yeue me to my mede
But soche a smocke as I was wont to were
That I therwith may wrie the wombe of here
That was your wife: and here I take my leue
Of you, mine own lord, lest I you greue.

The smocke (quod he) that thou hast on thy backe
Let it be stil, and bere it forth with the
But wel vneth that worde he spake
But went his way, for routhe and pite
Before the folke her selfe stripeth she
And in her smocke, with foote and heed all bare
Toward her fathers house forth is she fare

The folke folowed weping in her wey
And fortune euer thei cursed as thei gone
But she fro weping kept her eyen drey
Ne in this time, worde spake she none
Her father, that this tidinges herde anone
Cursed the daie and time, that nature
Shope him to ben a liues creature.

For out of doute, this olde pore man
Was euer suspect of her mariage
For euer he demed, sithen it began
That whan the lord fulfilled had his corage
Him would thinke it was a disparage
To his estate, so lowe for to alight
And voiden her, as sone as euer he might.

Ayenst his doughter hastely goth he
(For he by the noise of folke knew her coming)
And with her olde cote as it might be
He couered her, ful fore weping
But on her bodie might he it not bring
For rude was the cloth, and she more of age
By daies fele than was her mariage.

Thus with her father, for a certaine space
Dwelleth this flore of wifely pacience
That neuer by her wordes, nor by her face
Before the folke, ne eke in absence
Ne shewed she, that her was done offence
Ne of her hye estate no remembraunce
Ne had she, as by her countenaunce.

No wonder is, for in her great estate
Her gost was euer in plaine humilite
No tender mouth, ne hert delicate
Ne pompe, ne semblaunce of roialte
But full of pacience and benignite
Discrete, and prudelesse, and aye honorable
And to her husbande euer meke and stable.

When speake of Job, & mosse of his humblesse
As clerkes (whan hem list) can well endite
Namely of men: but in sothfastnesse
Though clerkes praise women but a lite
There can no man in humblesse hem aquite
As women can: ne be halfe so true
As women been, but it befall of newe

Explicit quinta pars: & sequitur pars sexta.

FRo Boloine is the Erle of Pauie come
Of whiche the fame sprong to more and lesse
And to the peoples eares, all and some
was couth eke, how a newe Marquesesse
He wt̄ him brought, in pompe & soche richesse
That was neuer seen with mannes yye
So noble araie, in west Lumbardie

The Marques, that hope & knewe al this
Er that this Erle was come, sent his message
To thilke poore and sely Grisildis
And she with humble hart, and glad visage
Not with swelling hart in her corage
Came at his hesse, and one her knees her set
And reuerently and wisely she him gret.

Grisilde (q he) my will is utterly
This maide, that wedded shall be vnto me
Receiued be to morowe all so roially
As it is possible in my hous to be
And eke that euery wight in his degre
Haue his estate in sitting and seruice
And also pleasaunt, as ye can best deuise.

I haue no woman sufficient certain
The chambres for to araie in ordinaunce
After my lusse, and therfore woll I fain
That thine were all soche gouernaunce
Thou knowest eke of old all my pleasaunce
Though thine araie be bad, and euill beseie
Doe thou thy deuer at the lest weie.

Not onely lorde that I am glad (q she)
To doen your lusse, but I desire also
You for to please, and serue in my degre
Withouten faining, and shall euer mo
Ne neuer for no weale, ne for no wo
Ne shall the ghost within my hart stent
To loue you best, withall my true entent.

And with ỹ worde, she gan the hous to dight
And tables to set, and beddes to make
And pained her to doen all that she might
Praiyng the chamberers for Gods sake
To hasten hem, and fast swepe and shake
And she the most seruisable of hem all
Hath euery chamber araied, and his hall.

Abouten vndren gan this Erle alight
that wt̄ him brought these noble childrē twey
For whiche the people ran to se that sight
Of her araie, so richely besey
And than at erste emonges hem thei sey
That Walter was no foole, though him lest
To chaunge his wife: for it was for the best.

For she is fairer, as thei demen all
Than is Grisilde, and more tender of age
And fairer fruict bitwene hem shall fall
And more pleasaunt, for her hie linage
Her bother eke, so fatre was of his age
That him to seen ỹ people had cauzt plesaūce
Commēding now the Marques gouernaūce

O sterne people, vnstad and vntrue
Ay vndiscrete, and chaunging as a fane
Deliting euer in rumer that is newe
For like the Moone euer waxe ye and wane
Euer full of clapping, dere inough a iane
Your dome is fals, your cōstaūce euill preueth
A full great foole is he that on you liueth.

Thus saiden sad folke in that cite
whan that the people gased vp and doun
For thei were glad, right with the nouelte
To haue a newe lady of her toun
No more of this make I now mencioun
But to Grisilde ayen woll I me dresse
And tellen her constaunce, and her businesse.

Well busie was Grisilde on euery thing
That to the feast was appertinent
Right nauzt was she abashed of her clothing
Though thei wer rude, and somwhat to rent
But with glad chere, to the yate is went
with other folke, to greten the Marquesesse
And after doeth she forth her businesse.

with right glad chere, the gestes she receiueth
And duromly, eueriche in his degre
That no man defaute there perceiueth
But euer they wondren, what she might be
That in so poore aray was for to se
And coud such honour, and reuerence
And worthily they praysen her prudence.

In

In all the meane while she ne stente
This maiden & eke her brother to commende
With al her hert, and benigne entente
So wel, that no man coud her prise amende
But at the last, whan these lordes wende
To sitten adoun to meate, he gan to call
Grisilde, as she was busy in the hall.

Grisilde (q he) as it were in his play
How liketh the my wife, and her beaute
Right wel my lorde (q she) for in good fay
I fairer saw I neuer none than she
I pray to God so yeue you prosperite
And so hope I, that he wol to you sende
Plesaunce inough, vnto your liues ende

But one thing I beseche, and warne also
That ye prike with no turmenting
This tender maiden, as ye han do mo
For she is softred in her norissing
More tenderly, in my supposing
She could not aduersite endure
As could a pore softred creature.

And whan this Walter saw her pacience
Her glad chere, and no malice at all
And he so ofte hath done her offence
And she aye constant, and stable as a wall
Continuing euer her innocence ouer all
This sturdy Marques, gan his hert dresse
To rewe vpon her wifely stedfastnesse.

This is inough, Grisilde mine (q he)
Be no more agast, ne iuell apaide
I haue thy faith, and thy benignite
As well as euer woman was assaide
In great estate, or pouely araide
Now know I dere wife thy stedfastnesse
And her in armes tooke, and gan to kesse.

And she for wonder, toke therof no kepe
She herde not what thing he to her saide
She stared as she had sterte out of her slepe
Till she out of her maslednesse abraide
Grisilde (q he) by god that for vs deide
Thou art my wife, and none other I haue
Ne neuer had, as God my soule saue

This is thy doughter, which ỹ hast supposed
To ben my wife, and none other feithfully
And this shall bē mine heir, as I haue dispo-
Thou bare hem in thy body truely (sed
At Boloine haue I kept hem likerly
Take hem ayen, for now maist thou not say
That thou hast lorne any of thy childrē tway

And folke, that other wise han said of me
I warne hem wel, ỹ I haue done this dede
For no malice, ne for no cruelte
But for to assaye thy womanhede
And not for to sley my children, God forbede
But for to kepen hem priuely and still
Til I thy purpose knew, and all thy will

whā she this herd, a swoune doun she falleth
For pitous ioy, and after her swouning
She both her yong children to her calleth
And in her armes, pitously weping
Enbraced hem bothe, tenderly kissing
Ful like a mother, with her salte teeres
She bathed both her visage and her heeres

O which a pitous thing it was to se
Her swouning, and her pitous voice to here
Graunt mercy lord, god thonke it you (q she)
That ye haue saued me my children dere
Now reche I neuer to be deed right here
Sithen I stond in your loue, & in your grace
No force of deth, ne whan my spirite pace.

O tendre, O dere, O yong children mine
Your wofol mother wende stedfastly
That cruel houndes, or some foule vermine
Had eten you, but god of his mercy
And your benigne father, so tenderly
Hath done you kepe: and in that same stounde
Al sodainly she swapte doun to the grounde.

And in her swouning, so sadly holdeth she
Her children two, whan she gan hem enbrace
That with great sleight and difficulte
The childrē from her armes thei gan to race
O many a tere, on many a pitouse face
Doune ran, of hem that stoden there beside
Unneth aboute her might no man abide.

Walter her gladdeth, and her sorow slaketh
She riseth vp al abashed from her traunce
And euery wight her ioy and feest maketh
Til she hath caught ayen her countinaunce
Walter her doth so faithfully plesaunce
That it was deintie to seen the chere
Betwixt hem two, whan thei were met ifere

These ladies, whan thei her time sey
Han taken her, and into chambre gon
And strippen her out of her rude arrey
And in a clothe of Gold, that bright shone
With a croune of many a riche stone
Upon her heed, thei her in to hall brought:
And there she was honoured as she ought.

The Clerke of Oxenfordes tale.

Thus hath this pitous day a blisful ende
For euery man and woman dothe his might
This day in mirth and reuel to dispende.
Til on the welken shone the sterres bright
For more solempne, in euery mannes sight
This feest was, and greater of costage
Than was the reuel of her mariage.

Wel many a yere, in hie prosperite
Liuen these two, in concorde and in rest
And richely his doughter maried he
Unto a lorde, one of the worthiest
Of al Itaile, and than in peace and rest
His wiues father in his courte he kepte
Til that his soule out of his body crepte.

His sonne succedeth in his heritage
In rest and peace, after his fathers day
And fortunate was ehe in mariage
All put he not his wife in great assay
This world is not so strong, it is no nay
As it hath ben in olde times yore
And herkneth what thautour saith therfore.

THis story is said, not for ỹ wiues should
Folowen Grisilde, as in humilite
For it were inportable tho thei would
But that euery wight in his degre
Should be constaunt, in al aduersite
As was Grisild, wherfore Petrarke writeth
This storie, which with hie stile he enditeth

For sith a woman was so pacient
Unto a mortall man, wel more we ought
Receiue all in gree that God vs sent
For great skill he preueth that he wrought
But he ne tempteth no man that he bought
As saith saint Jame, if ye his pistell rede
He preueth folke but a day, it is no drede.

And suffreth vs as for our exercise
With sharpe scourges of aduersite
Wel ofte to be beaten, in sondrie wise
Not for to know our wil, for certes he
Or we were borne, knew al our frelte
And for our best, is al his gouernaunce
Let vs liue than in vertuous suffraunce

But one word herkeneth lordinges or ye go
It were ful harde to finde now a dayes
In al a countre Grisildes thre or two
For if thei were put to suche assayes
The gold of hem hath so bad a layes
With brasse, for thoughe it be faire at eye
It would rather brast a two than plie

For which here, for ỹ wiues loue of Bathe
whose life and secte, mighty God maintene
In high maistry, or els ware it skathe
I wil with lusty hert, fresshe and grene
Say you a song, to glad you I wene
And let vs stinte of ernest matere
Herkeneth my lõg that saith in this manere.

Lenuoye de Chaucer a les mariz de nostre temps.

GRisilde is deed and eke her pacience
And bothe at ones buried in Itaile
For which I crye in open audience
No wedded man be so hardy to assaile
His wiues pacience in trust to finde
Grisildes, for in certaine he shall faile.

O noble wiues, ful of hie prudence
Let no humilite your tonge naile
Ne let no clerke haue cause ne diligence
To write of you a storie of such meruaile
As of Grisilde, pacient and kinde
Lest Chechilace swalow you in her entraile

Foloweth Ecco, that holdeth no silence
But euer answereth at the countre taile
Beth no adassed for your innocence
But sharpely taketh on you the gouernaile
Enprinteth wel this lesson in your minde
For commen profite, sithnesse it may auaile

Ne dredeth hem not, doth hem no reuerẽce
For though thin husbande armed be in maile
The arrowes of thy crabbed eloquence
Shall perce his brest, and eke his aduentaile
In ielousye eke, loke thou him binde
And ỹ shal make him couch as doth a quaile

If ỹ be faire, there folke ben in presence
Shewe thou thy visage, and thine apparaile
If thou be foule, be fre of thy dispence
To get the frendes aye do thy trauaile
Be aye of chere, as light as lefe on linde
And let him care, wepe, wringe, and waile.

ye archwiues, stõdeth aye at your defence
Sith ye be strong, as is a great camaile
Ne suffreth not, that men do you offence
And ye sklendre wiues, feble as in bataile
Beth eygre as any tigre is in Inde
Aye clappeth as a mil, I you counsaile.

THere endeth the Clerke of Oxfordes tale.

THere

Here folowethe the wordes of our Host.

This worthy clerck, whā ended was his tale
Our Host said and swore by cockes bones
Me were leuer than a barel of ale
My wife at home had herd this legende ones
This is a gentel tale for the nones
As to my purpose, wiste ye my will
But thing that wol not be, let it be still.

Here endeth the wordes of our Hoste, and here folowethe the Frankeleins Prologue.

Hese old gentill Britons in her daies
Of diuers auentures maden laies
Rimed first in her mother tonge
Which layes, with her instrumentes thei song
Or els reden hem for her plesaunce
And one of hem haue I in remembraunce
Whiche I shal say, as willing as I can.
But sirs, bicause I am a borel man
At my beginning first I you beseche
Haue me excused of my rude speche
I lerned neuer Rhetorike certaine
Thing that I speke, mote be bare and plaine
I slept neuer on the mounte of Pernaso
Ne lerned neuer Marcus Tullius Cicero
Colours ne know I none, withouten drede
But such colours as growen in the mede
Or els such as men dien or painte
Coloures of Rhetorike, ben to me quainte
My spirite feleth not of such matere
This is my tale, if ye wol it here.

Here endeth the Frankeleins prologue, and here folowethe the Frankeleins tale.

N Armorike, that called is Britaine
There was a knight, that loued & did his paine
To serue ladyes in hys best wise
And manye a labour, and many a great empryse
He for his lady wrought, er she were wonne
For she was one the fayrest vnder sonne
And eke therto comen of hie kinrede
That wel vnneth durst this knight for drede
Tel her his wo, his paine, and his distresse
But at the last, she of her worthinesse
And namely for his meke obeysaunce
Hath suche a pite caught of his penaunce
That priuely she fill of his accorde
To take him for her husbonde and her lorde
Of such lordship, as mē haue ouer her wiues
And for to lede in the more blisse her liues
Of his fre wil, he swore her as a knight
That neuer in al his life, day ne night
Ne should he take vpon him no maistry
Againe her wil, ne kithe her ielousy
But her obey, and folowe her wil in all
As any louer to his lady shall
Saue that the name of souerainte
That would he haue for shame of his degre.
She thōked him, & with ful great humblesse
She said: sir, sithe of your gentilnesse
Ye profred me to haue so large a raine
Ne would God neuer betwirt vs twaine
As in my gilte, were either werre or strife
Sir, I wol be your trewe humble wife
Haue here my trueth, til that my hert brest
Thus ben thei bothe in quiet and in rest.
For one thing sirs, safely dare I seine
That frendes, euerich other must obeine
If thei wol long holden companie
Loue wol not be constrained by maistrie
When maistry cometh, the God of loue anon
Beateth his winges, and farewell he is gon
Loue is a thing, as any spirite free
Women of kinde desiren liberte
And not to be constrained as a thrall
And so done men, if I sothe saie shall
Loke who that moste patient is in loue
He is at his auauntage all aboue
Pacience is an hie vertue certaine
For it venquisheth, as these clerkes saine
Thinges that rigour shall neuer attaine
For euery word, men may not chide or plaine
Lerneth to suffer, or els, so mote I gone
Ye shall it lerne whether ye woll or none
For in this world certaine, no wight ther is
That he ne doth or saieth somtime a mis
Ire, sickenesse, or constellacion
Wine, wo, or chaunging of complexcion
Causeth ful ofte, to don a misse or speken
On euery wrong, a man may not be wreken
After the time, must be temperaunce
To euery wight that can of gouernaunce
And therfore, hath this worthie wise knight
To liue in ease, suffraunce her hight
And she to him ful wisely gan swere

That neuer should ther be default in here
Here may men se, humble and wise accorde
Thus hath she take her seruaunt & her lorde
Seruaunt in loue, and lord in mariage
Than was he bothe in lordship and seruage
Saruage: nay, but in lordship aboue
Sithen he hath both his lady and his loue
His lady certes, and his wife also
The whiche that lawe of londe accordeth to
And when he was in this prosperite
Home with his wife he goth, into his contre
Nat fer fro Pẽmarke, ther his dwelling was
Where as he liueth in ioye and solas
Who coude tell, but he had wedded be
The ioy, the ease, and the prosperite
That is betwixt an husbonde and his wife
Euermore lasted this blisful life
Til that this knight, of which I spehe thus
That of Caere Juda, was cleped Arueragus
Shope him to dwel, a yere or twaine (gus
In Englond, that cleped was Britaine
To seken in armes worship and honour
For all his luste he sette in suche labour
And dwelt ther two yere, the boke saith thus
Now wol I stint of this Arueragus
And spehe I wol of Dorigen his wife
That loueth her husbonde as her hertes life
For his absence, wepeth she and siketh
As don these noble wiues when hem liketh
She mourneth, waileth, fasteth, & plaineth
Desire of his presence, her so constraineth
That al this wide world set she at nought
Her frendes, which knewe her heuy thought
Comforten her, in all that euer they may
They preachē her, and tellen her night & day
That causeles she slewe her selfe, alas
And euery comfort possible in this caas
They don to her, with all her businesse
And al for to maken her leue her heuinesse.
By processe, as ye knowen euerichone
Men mowen so longe grauen in a stone
Til some figure therin printed be
So long han they comforted her, till she
Receiued hath by hope and by reson
The enprinting of her constellacion
Through which her gret sorow gan alwage
She may not alway enduren suche a rage
And eke Arueragus in all this care
Hath sent his letters home of his welfare
And that he wol come hastely againe
Or els had this sorow her herte slaine.
Her frendes sawe her sorow gan to slake
And praiden her on knees, for goddes sake
To come and romen in her companie
Away to driuen her derke fantasie
And finally she graunted that requeste
For wel she saw it was for the beste.
Now stode her castell fast by the see
And ofte with her frendes walked she
Her to disport on the bankes hie
Where as she may shippes and barges sie
Sailing her course, where hem liste go
But yet was that a parcell of her wo
For to her selfe ful oft alas said she
Is there no shippe, of so many as I se
Wol bring home my lord: than were my hert
Warished of these bitter paines smert.
Another time, would she sitte and thinke
And cast her eyen downwarde fro the brinke
But when she sawe the grisly rockes blake
For very feare, so would her hert quake
That on her fete she might not her sustene
Than would she sit adoun vpon the grene
And pitously into the see beholde
And say right thus, with sorouful sikes colde
Eterne God, that through thy purueyance
Ledest this world, by certeine gouernaunce
In idle as men sain, dost thou nothing make
But lord, these grisly fendely rockes blake
That semen rather a foule confusion
Of werke, than a faire creacion
Of suche a parfite God, wise and full stable
Why haue ye wrought this werk vnreasonable:
For by this werke, north, south, west, ne este
Ther nis fostred, man, birde, ne beste
It doth no good, but anoyeth
See ye not lord, how mankinde it distroieth
An hundred thousande bodies of mankinde
Haue rockes slain, al be they not in minde
Sin mankind is so faire a part of thy werke
That thou it madest like thy owne werke
Than semed it ye had a great charte
Towarde mankinde, but how then may it be
That ye suche menes maken it to disioyen:
which menes don no good, but euer anoyen.
I wote wel clerkes woll saine as hem lest
By argumentes, that all is for the best
Though I ne can not the causes wel knowe
But thilke God, ỹ made the winde to blowe
As kepe my lord, this is my conclusion
To clerkes lette I al this disputacion
And wolde God that all these rockes blake
Were sonken in to hell for his sake.
These rockes slee mine heart for feare
Thus would she say wt many a pitous teare
Her frendes sawe it was for her no disport
To romen by the see, but discomfort
And shapen hem to plain somwhere elles
They leden her by riuers and by welles
And eke in other places delectables

They

They dauncen and they plaien at the tables
So on a day, right in the morowe tide
Unto a gardeine, that was there beside
In which that thei had made her ordinaunce
Of vitailes, and other purueyaunce
They gon and plain hem al the long day
And this was in the sixte morowe of May
Which May hath painted with his soft shoures
This gardaine full of leues and of floures
And craftе of mannes honde so curiously
Arayed had this gardaine truely
That neuer nas there garden of suche prise
But if it were the very paradise
The odour of floures, and the freshe sight
Would haue made any hert light
That euer was born, but if to gret sickenesse
Or to great sorowe helde it in distresse
So was it full of beaute, with plesaunce.
And after dinner gonne thei daunce
And singe also, saue Dorigene alone
That yet vnto her self made her mone
For she ne sey him on the daunce go
That was her husbonde, and her loue also
But natheless, she muste her time abide
And with good hope, let her sorowe slide.
Upon this daunce, among other men
Daunced a squier before Dorigen
That fresher was, and iolier of aray
As to my doome, then is the moneth of May
He singeth, and daunceth, passing euery man
That is or was, sithen the world began
And therwithall, & men shoulde him discriue
One of the best faring men on liue
Yonge, stronge, vertuous, riche, and wise
And wel beloued, and holden of great prise
And shortely, if I the sothe tell shall
Unwitting of this Dorigen at all
This lusty squier, seruaunt to Venus
Whiche icleped was Aurelius
Had loued her beste of any creature
Two yere and more, as was his auenture
But neuer durst he tell her his greuaunce
Withouten cuppe he dronke al his penaunce
He was dispaired, nothing durst he say
Saue in his songes, somwhat wold he wray
His wo, as in general complaining
He said he loued, and was beloued nothing
Of whiche matere made he many layes
Songes, complaintes, roundels, verilayes
How that he durst not his sorow tell
But languish, as dothe a fury in hell
And die he muste (he said) as did Ecco
For Narcissus, that durst not tell his wo.
In other maner then ye herde me say
He durst not he to her his wo bewray
Saue parauenture somtime at daunces
There yonge folke kepen her obseruaunces
It may well be, he loked on her face
In suche a wise, as men that aske grace
But nothing wiste she of his entent
Natheless it happed, er thei thence went
Bicause that he was her neighbour
And was a man of worship and honour
And had knowen him oft times yore
They fell in speche, and so forth more & more
Unto his purpose than drowe Aurelius
And when he sawe his time he said thus.
Madame (q he) by god that this world made
So that I wist, that I might your hert glade
I would that day, that your Aruyragus
Went ouer the see, that I Aurelius
Had went ther ỹ I should neuer come againe
For wel I wote my seruice is in vaine.
My guerdon nis but bresting of mine hert
Madame rueth vpon my paines smert
For with one worde ye may me slee or saue
Here at your fote God would ỹ I wer graue
I ne haue as now no leiser more to sey
Haue mercy swete, or ye wol do me dey.
She gan to loke vpon Aurelius
Is this your wil (q she) and say ye thus?
Neuer erst (q she) ne wist I what ye mente
But now I know Aurelius your entente
By thilke God, that yaue me soule and life
Ne shal I neuer be vntrewe wife
In word ne in werke, as far as I haue wit
I wol ben his to whom I am knit
Take this for a finall answere of me
But after this in plaie thus said she.
Aurelius (q she) by god aboue
Yet wol I graunt you to ben your loue
(Sithen I se you so pitously complaine)
Loke what day that endlong Britaine
Ye remeue all the rockes, stone by stone
That thei ne let shippe ne bote to gone
I say whē ye haue made these costes so clene
Of rockes, that there nis no stone isene
Than wol I loue you best of any man
Here haue my trueth, in al that euer I can.
Is there none other grace in you (q he?)
No by that lord (q she) that maked me.
For wel I wote that it shall neuer betide
Let suche folie out of your hert glide
What deintie should a man haue in his life
For to go loue another mannes wife?
That hath her body when so that him liketh
Aurelius full oft sore siketh
Wo was Aurely, whan he this herde
And with a sorouful chere he thus answerde
Madame (q he) this were impossible

Then mote I die or lodeine dethe horrible
And with that worde he turned him anone.
Tho come her other frendes euerichone
And in the aleyes romeden vp and doun
And nothing wiste of this conclusion
But sodainly began to reuell newe
Till that the bright sonne lost his hewe
For the orizont hath reft the sonne his light
This is as muche to say, as it was night
And home they gon in ioy and in solas
Saue onely wretched Aurelius, alas
He to his house is gon with sorowfull harte
He said he might not from his dethe astarte
Him semed, that he felte his hert colde
Up to heuen his hondes gan he holde
And on his knees bare, he set him adoun
And in his rauing said this orisoun
For very wo out of his witte he braide
He ne wist what he spake, but thus he saide
With pitous hert hath his cõplaint begonne
Unto the goddes, and first vnto the sonne
He said: God Apollo and gouernour
Of euery plante, herbe, tree, and flour
That yeuest after thy declination
To ilke of hem his time and ceson
As thine herberowe chaungeth low and hie
Lord Phebus, cast thy merciable eye
On wretched Aurelius, which am but lorne
Lo lorde, my lady hath my deth isworne
Without gilt, but thy benignite
Upon my deedly hert haue some pite
For wel I wot lorde Phebus, if ye lefte
Ye may me helpe saue my lady beste
Now vouche ye saue, that I you deuise
How that I maye beholpen & in what wise.
Your blisful suster Lucina the shene
That of the see is goddesse and quene
Though Neptunus hath deite in the see
Yet empresse abouen him is she
Ye knowen wel lord, right as her desire
Is to be quickened and lighted of your fire
For whiche that she foloweth you full besily
Right so the see desireth naturally
To folowen her that is goddesse
Both of the see, and riuers more and lesse
Wherfore lorde Phebus, this is my requeste
Do this miracle, or do mine hert breste
That now next at this opposicion
Which in signe shal be the Lion
As praieth her so great a flodde to bring
That fiue fadome at the lest, it ouer spring
The highest rocke in Armorike Britaine
And let this flodde dure yeres twaine
Than certes to my lady may I say
Holdeth your hest, the roches ben away
This thing may ye lightly don for me
Pray her to gon no faster course than ye
I say thus, prayeth your suster that she go
No faster course than ye in yeres two
Than shal she be at the ful alway
And spring floode lasting both night and day
And but she vouchesafe in suche manere
To grannt me my soueraine lady dere
Pray her to sinken euery rocke adoun
Into her owne derke regioun
Under the ground, there Pluto dwelleth in
Or neuer more shall I my lady win
Thy tẽple in Delphos, wol I barfote seke
O lord Phebus, se the teares on my cheke
And on my paine haue some compassion
And with that word, in swoune he fel adoun
And long time he lay in a traunce.
His brother, which ỹ knew of his penaunce
Up caught him, and to bed him brought
Dispeyred in this turment and this thought
Lette I this woful creature lie
Chese he whether he wol liue or die.
Arueragus with heale and greate honour
(As he that was of cheualry the flour)
Is comen home, and other worthy men
O blisful art thou now Dorigen
That hast thy lusty husbonde in thine armes
That fresh knight, ỹ worthy man of armes
That loueth the, as his owen hertes life
Nothing like him to be imaginatife
If any wight had spoken (while he was out)
To her of loue, therof had he no dout
He entendeth not to suche matere
But daũceth, iusteth, & maketh her good chere
And thus in ioy and blisse I let hem dwell
And of wofull Aurelius wol I tell.
In langour and in turmente dispitous
Two yere and more, lay wretched Aurelius
Er any sote on erth he might gone
Ne comfort in this time had he none
Saue of his brother, whiche was a clerke
He knewe of al this wo and al this werke
For to non other creature certain
Of this matere, durst he no worde sain
Under his brest he bare it more secre
Than euer did Pamphilus for Galathe
His brest was hole without for to seen
But in his hert aye, was the arrowe keen
And well ye knowen that of a surfanure
In surgery, is perilous the cure
But men might touch ỹ arow or com therby
His brother weped and waileth priuely
Till at the last him fel in remembraunce
That while he was at Orliaũce in Fraunce
(As these clerkes ponge that ben ful wise)

To

To reden artes that been curious
Seken in euery halke and in euery Herne
Perticuler science for to lerne
He him remembred that vpon a deie
At Orliaunce in studie a booke he seie
Of Magike naturell, whiche his felawe
That was in that time a bacheler of lawe
All were he there to learne an other craft
Had priuely vpon his dere ilaft
Whiche booke spake of mochell operacions
Touching the foure and twentie Mansions
That longen to the Moon, and soche folie
As in our daies is not worthe a Flie
For holy churche saieth in our bileue
Ne suffreth non illusion vs to greue
And whā this boke was in his remēbraunce
Anon for ioie his harte gan daunce
And to himself he saied priuely
My brother shall be warished sikerly
For I am siker that there be sciences
By whiche men maken diuers aparences
Soche as these subtell tregetores plaie
For oft at feastes haue I well heard saie
That tregetors, within an hall large
Haue made come in water and a barge
And in the halle rowen vp and doun
Somtime hath semed a grim Lion
And somtime floures spring as in a mede
Somtime a vine, and grapes white and rede
Somtime a castell of lime and stone
And whan hem liked, voiden hem anon
Thus semed it to euery mannes sight.
Now than cōclude I thus, if that I might
At Orliaunce some old felawe finde
That had this Moones Mansions in minde
Or other Magike naturall aboue
He should wel make my brother haue his loue
For with an apparaunce a clerke maie make
To mannes sight, that all the rockes blake
Of Britain, wer inuoided euerichone
And ships by ỹ brinke to comen and gone
And in soche forme enduren a yere or two
Than wer my brother warished of his wo
Than must he nedes hold her biheft
Or els he shall shame her at the left
What should I make a lenger tale of this?
Unto his brothers bedde he comen is
And soche comfort he yaue him for to gon
To Orleaunce, that he vp sert anon
And on his waie than is he forth ifare
In hope to been lessed of his care.
Whan thei wer comen almoste to that cite
(But if it were a two forlong or thre)
A yong clerke roming by himself thei met
Whiche that in Latin thriftely hem gret
And afterward he saied a wonder thing
I know the cause of your comming
And er thei farther any foote went
He told hem all that was in her entent
This Briton clerke asked him of felowes
The whiche he had knowen in old daies
He answerde him, that thei dedde were
For whiche he wept oft full many a tere.
Doune of his horse Aurelius light anon
And with this Magicien forth is he gon
Home to his house, and made him well at ese
Hem lacked no vitaile that hem might plese
So well araied an hous as there was one
Aurelius in his life saw he neuer none
He shewed him, or he went to suppere
Forestes and parkes, full of wilde dere
He saw there Hartes, with hornes hie
The greatest that euer wer seen with ije
He se of hem an hundred slain with houndes
And sum of arowes bled with bitter woūdes
He saw, whan voided were the wilde dere
These faucones, vpon a faire riuere
That with the haukes han the Heron slain
Tho saw he knightes iusting in a plain
And after this he did him soche pleasaunce
That he him shewed his lady in a daunce
On whiche himself daunced as him thought
And whā this maister, ỹ this magike wrought
Saw it was time, he clapped his hondes to
And fare well our reuell, all was ago
And remeued neuer out of his hous
While thei saw all this sight merucilous
But in his studie there his bookes be
Thei saten still, no wight but thei thre.
To him this maister called his squier
And saied him thus, is redy our supper
Almoste an houre it is, I vndertake
Sithen I you bad our supper redy make
Whan that these worthy men went with me
Into my studie, there as my bookes be.
Sir (ỹ the squier) whan it liketh you
It is all redy, though ye woll right now.
Go we suppe than (ỹ he) for the best
These amorous folke some time mote haue rest
And after supper fell thei in trete
What somme should this maister guerdon be
To remeue all the rockes of Britain
And eke from Girond to the mouth of Sain.
He made it strange & sworē so god him saue
Lasse thā a thousand poūd wold he not haue
Ne gladly for that somme nolde he it doen.
Aurelius with blisfull herte anon
Answerd thus: Fie on a thousande pound
This wide worlde, whiche men saie is round
I would it yeue, if I were lorde of it

This bargain is fuldriue, for we be knit
Ye shall be paied truely by my trouth
But loke now for no negligence or slouth
ye tarien vs here no lenger than to morowe
Naie(q this clerke) here my trouth to borow
To bedde is gon Aurelius whan him lesse
And well nie all night he had his rest
what for his labour, and his hope of blisse
His wofull harte of penaunce had a lisse.
Upon the morowe whan that it was daie
To Britain toke thei the right waie
Aurelius, and this Magicine him beside
And been discended there thei would abide
And this was, as the boke doeth remember
In the cold frostie season of December.
Phebus wared old, and hewed like Laton
That afore in his hote declinacion
Shone as ỹ brenning gold, w̃ stremes bright
But now in Capricorne adoune he light
where as he shone full pale, I dare well sain
The bitter frost, with the slidder rain
Destroied hath the grene in euery yerde
Janus sit by the fire with double berde
And drinketh of his bugle horne the wine
Biforn him stont braune of the tusked swine
And nowell crieth euery lustie man
Aurelius, in all that euer he can
Doeth to his maister chere and reuerence
And praieth him to doen his diligence
To bringen him out of his paines smart
Or with a swerd that he would slit his hart.
This clerke sothe routh hath on this man
That night & daie he spedeth him that he can
To waite a time of his conclusion
This is to saie, to make illusion
Or sothe an apparence or iogelrie
I ne can no termes of Astrologie
That he and euery wight should wene & saie
That of Britain the rockes wer awaie
Or els thei wer sonken vnder the ground
Till at the last he hath his time ifound
To make his iapes and his wretchednesse
Of sothe superstitious cursednesse
His tollitan tables he forth brought
Full well corrected, him lacked nought
Neither his collect, ne his expans yeres
Ne his rootes, ne his other geres
As been his centris, and his argumentes
And his proporcionell conuenientes
For his equacions in euery thing
And by his eight spheres in his werking
He knew ful well how far alnath was shoue
Fro the hedde of thilke fixe Aries aboue
That in the ninth spere considered is
Full subtelly he had calked all this
And whan he had found his first Mansion
He knewe the remnaunt by proporsion
And knewe the riding of the Moon wele
And in soche face, the terme and euery dele
And knewe also his other obseruaunces
For soche illusions and soche mischaunces
As Heathen folke vsed in thilke daies
For whiche ne maked he no lenger delaies
But thrugh his magike, for a wene or tway
It semed that all the rockes wer away.
Aurelius, whiche that dispeired is
whither he shall haue his loue, or faire amis
Awaiteth night and daie on this miracle
And whan he knewe there was non obstacle
But that voided were these rockes euerichon
Doune to the maisters fete he fell anon
And saied, I wofull wretche Aurelius
Thanke you lorde and lady mine Venus
That me hath holpen fro my cares cold
And to the tẽple his waie forth hath he hold
where as he knewe he should his lady se
And whan he sawe his time, anon right he
With dredfull harte, and with humble chere
Salued hath his souerain lady dere.
My rightfull lady (q this wofull man)
whom I serue and loue, as I best can
And lothest wer of all this worlde displease
Nere it that I for you haue soche disease
That I must die here at your feete anon
Nought would I tel you how wo is me begon
But certes either must I die or plain
ye slea me giltelesse for very pain
But of my death, though ye haue no routh
Auisen you, er that ye breaken your trouth
Repenteth you, for that ilke God aboue
For ye slea me, bicause that I you loue
For madame, well ye wot that ye haue right
Not that I chalenge any thing of right
Of you my souerain lady, but of your grace
But in a garden yonde in soche a place
ye wote right well what ye bight me
And in my honde your trouth plight ye
To loue me best, God wote ye saied so:
All be it I am worthy thereto
Madame I speake for the honour of you
More than for to saue my hartes life now
I haue doen right as ye commaunded me
And if ye vouchsafe, ye maie go se
Doeth as you list, haueth your hest in minde
For quicke or ded, right there ye shall me finde
In you lieth all to doe me liue or deie
But well I wote the rockes been aweie.
He toke his leue, and she astonied stoode
In all her face there nas a droppe of bloode
She wende neuer han come in soche a trappe

Alas

Alas (q she) that euer this should happe
For wende I neuer by possibilite
That soche a miser or maruaile might be
It is against the processe of nature
And home she goeth a sorowfull creature
For very feare vnnethes maie she go
She wepeth and waileth a daie or two
And swouneth, that it was routh to se
But why it was to no wight told she
For out of toune was gon Aruiragus
But to her self she spake, and saied thus
In her complaint, as ye shall after here
With face pale, and with sorowfull chere.
Alas (q she) on thee fortune I plain
That vnware hast wrapped me in thy chain
Fro whiche to escape, wot I no socour
Saue onely death, or els dishonour
One of these two behoueth me to chese
But natheles, yet had I leuer to lese
My life, than of my body to haue a shame
Or knowe my self false, or lese my name
And with my death, I maie be quit i wis
Hath there not many a wife er this
And many a maide, islain her self alas
Rather than with her body doen trespas
And certes lo, these stories been witnesse
Whan thurtie tyrauntes, full of cursidnesse
Had slain Phydon, in Athenes at the feest
Thei commaunded his doughters to arest
And bringen hem before hem in dispite
All naked, to fulfill her soule delite
And in her fathers blood, he did hem daunce
vpon ỳ pauemẽt, God yeue him mischaunce
For whiche this wofull maidens ful of drede
Rather than thei would lesen her maidẽhede
Thei priuely been stert into a well
And drenched hem self, as bokes tell.
Thei of Messene let enquire and seke
Of Lacidomony fiftie maidens eke
On which thei would haue doen her lecherie
But there was none of all that companie
That she nas slain, and with a glad entent
Chese rather for to dien, than for to assent
To been oppressed of her maidenhede
Why should I than to die been in drede?
Lo eke the tyraunt Aristoclides
That loued a maid, that hight Simphalides
Whan that her father slain was on a night
Vnto Dianes temple goth she anon right
And hent the Image, with her armes two
Fro whiche Image would she neuer go
No wight might fro it her hondes race
Till she was slain, right in the self place.
Now lithnes ỳ maidens had soche dispite
To been defouled with mannes foule delite
Well ought a wife rather her self slac
Than be defouled, as thinketh me.
What shall I saie of Hasdruballes wife?
That at Cartage biraft her self her life
For whã she sawe ỳ Romanes wan the toun
She toke her children all, and lept adoun
Into the fire, and chese rather to die
Than any Roman did her vilanie.
Hath not Lucrece islain her self, alas
At Rome, there she oppressed was
Of Tarquine, for her thought it was shame
To liue, whan that she had lost her name.
The eight maidens of Milesie also
Han slain hem selue for very drede and wo
Rather than folk of Gaule should hẽ oppresse
More than a thousande stories, as I gesse
Couth I now tell as touching this matere.
Whan Asdrubas was slain, his wife so dere
Her self slowe, and let her blood to glide
In Asdrubas woundes, brode and wide
And saied, my body at the least waie
There shall no wight defoule if I maie.
What should I mo ensamples hereof saine
Sithens that so many han hem slain
Well rather than thei would defouled be
I woll conclude that it is best for me
Well rather slea my self in some manere
As did Demotius doughter dere
Bicause that she nolde not defouled be.
O Sedasus, it is full great pite
To reden how thy doughters diden, alas!
That slowen hem self for soche a maner cas
As greate a pite was it or well more
The Theban maiden, that for Nichanore
For one of Macedone had her oppressed
With her death her maidenhede she redressed
What shall I saine of Nicerates wife
That for soche case biraft her self her life?
How true was eke to Alcibiades
His loue, that for to dien rather chees
Than for to suffren his body vnburied be.
Lo whiche a wife was Alceste (q she)
What saieth Homere of good Penelope?
All Grece knoweth of her chastite.
Parde of Laodomia is written thus
That whã at Troie was slain Protheselaus
No lenger nolde she liue after his daie.
Thesame of noble Portia tell I maie
Withouten Brutus couth she not liue
To whom she had all her harte igiue.
The parfite wifehode of Artemisy
Honoured is, throughout all Barbary
O thenta Quene, thy wifely chastite
To all wiues maie a mirrour be.
Thesame thing I saie of Bilia

Of

The Frankeleins tale.

Of Rodogone, and eke Valeria.
Thus plained Dorigene a daie or tweie
Purposing euer that she would deie
But natheles vpon the third night
Home came Arueragus, the worthy knight
And asked her why she wept so sore
And she gan wepen euer lenger the more
Alas (q she) that euer was I borne
Thus haue I said (q she) thus haue I sworne
And told him all, as ye haue heard before
It nedeth not to rehearce it no more
This husbond w glad chere in sondry wise
Answerd and saied, as I shall you deuise
Is there aught els Dorigene but this?
Naie naie (q she) God helpe me so as wis
This is to moche, and it were Goddes will.
Ye wife (q he) let slepe that is still
It maie be well yet parauenture to daie
Ye shall your trouth hold by my faie
For God so wisly haue mercie on me
I had well leuer sticked for to be
For very loue whiche that I to you haue
But if ye should your trouth saue
Trouth is the hiest thing that men may kepe
But with that worde he brast anon to wepe
And saied, I you forbid on pain of death
That neuer whiles you lasteth life or breath
To no wight tell of this misauenture
As I maie best I woll my wo endure
Ne make no countenaunce of heuinesse
That folke of you maie deme harme ne gesse
And forth he cleped a squier and a maide
Goth forth anon with Dorigene he saied
And bringeth her in soche a place anone
They toke her leue, and on her waie they gone
But they ne wist why she thider went
She nolde no wight tell her entent.
This squier, whiche that hight Aurelius
On Dorigene, whiche that was so amerous
Of auenture happed her to mete
Amid the toune, right in the hie strete
As she would haue gon the waie forth right
Toward the garden, there as she had hight
And he was to the garden ward also
For well he spied whan she would go
Out of her hous, to any maner place
But thus they met of auenture or of grace
And he salueth her with glad entent
And asked of her whider that she went.
And she answerd half as she wer mad
Unto the garden as my husbond badde
My trouth for to hold, alas alas
Aurelius gan wondren of this caas
And in his harte had great compassion
Of her chere, and of her lamentacion
And of Aruiragus the worthy knight
That had her hold all that she had hight
So loth he was þ she should breke her trouth
And in his hart he caught of it greate routh
Considring the best on euery side
That fro his lust wer him better abide
Than doe so hie a churlishe wretchidnesse
Ayenst fraunchise, and ayenst all gentilnesse
For whiche in fewe wordes saied he thus
Madame, saieth to your lorde Aruiragus
That sithen I se this great gentilnesse
Of him, and eke I se well your distresse
That ye to me should hold your trouth
Certes me thinketh it were great routh
I haue well leuer euer to suffer wo
Than depart the loue bitwixt you two
I you release madame into your honde
Quite euery surement and euery bonde
That ye haue made to me, as here biforne
Sithens thilke time that ye were borne
My trouth I plight, I shall you neuer repreue
Of no behest, and here I take my leue
As of the truest and the best wife
That euer yet I knewe in all my life
But euery wight beware of her biheste
On Dorigene remembreth at the leste
Thus can a squier doen a gentill dede
As well as can a knight, withouten drede.
She thonked him vpon her knees all bare
And home vnto her husbonde is she fare
And told him all, as ye han heard me saied
And be ye siker, he was so well apaied
That it were vnpossible me to write
What should I lenger of this case endite?
Aruiragus, and Dorigene his wife
In souerain blisse leden forth her life
Neuer after was there anger hem bitwene
He cherished her, as though she wer a Quene
And she was to him true for euermore
Of these two folkes ye get of me no more.
Aurelius, that his cost hath all forlorne
Cursed the time that euer he was borne
Alas (q he) alas that euer I beheight
Of pured gold a thousande pound of weight
Unto this Philosopher, how shall I doe?
I se no more, but that I am fordoe
Mine heritage mote I nedes sell
And den a begger, here maie I no lēger dwel
And shame all my kinrede in this place
But I of him maie get better grace
But natheles I woll of him assaie
At certain daies, yere by yere to paie
And thonke him of his great curtesie
My trouth woll I kepe, I woll not lie
With harte sore, he goth vnto his cofer

And

And brought gold vnto the Philosopher
The value of fiue hundred pound as I gesse
And him beseecheth of his gentilnesse
To graunt him daies of the remenaunt
And saied: maister I dare well make auaunt
I failed neuer of my trouth as yet
For sikerly my debt shall be quite
Towardes you, how that euer I fare
To gon a begging in my kirtell bare
But would ye vouchsafe vpon suerte
Two yere or thre for to respite me
Than were I well, for els mote I sell
Mine heritage, there is no more to tell.
This Philosopher soberly answerde
And saied thus, whan he this worde herde
Haue I not hold couenaunt vnto thee?
Yes certes, well and truely (ꝙ he)
Hast thou not had thy lady as thee liketh?
No no (ꝙ he) and sorily he siketh.
What was the cause, tell me if yͭ thou can?
Aurelius anon his tale began
And told him all as ye han heard bifore
It nedeth not to rehearce it any more.
He saied Aruiragus of gentilnes
Had leuer die in sorowe and in distresse
Than his wife were of her trouth fals
The sorowe of Dorigene he told him als
How loth she was to been a wicked wife
And that she had leuer haue lost her life
And yͭ her trouth she swore through innocẽce
She now erst heard speake of apparence
That made me haue of her so great pite
And right as frely as he sent her to me
As frely sent I her to him again
This is all & some, there nis nomore to sain.
The Philosopher answerd, leue brother
Eueriche of you did gentilly to other
Thou art a squier, and he is a knight
But God forbid, for his blissfull might
But if a clerke could doen a gentill deede
As well as any of you, it is no dreede.
Sir I release thee thy thousande pound
As now thou were crope out of the ground
Ne neuer er now haddest thou knowen me
For sir, I woll not taken a peny of thee
For all my craft, ne nought for my trauaile
Thou hast ipaied right well for my vitaile
It is inough, and farwel and haue good daie
And toke his horse, & rode forth on his waie.
Lordinges this questiõ would I aske now
Whiche was the moste fre, as thinketh you?
Now telleth me, er that I ferther wende
I can no more, my tale is at an ende.

¶ Here endeth the Frankeleins tale.

¶ Here beginneth the second Nonnes Prologue.

The minister and the norice vnto vices
Whiche that menne clepen in Englishe idlenesse
That is Porter of the gate of delices
To eschue, and by her contrary her oppresse
That is to sain, by lefull besinesse
Well ought we to doen our entent
Lest that the fende through idlenesse vs hent.

For he that with his thousande cordes slie
Continually vs waiteth to be clappe
Whan he maie man in idlenesse espie
He can so lightly catche him in his trappe
Till that a man be hent, right by the lappe
He nis not ware the fende hath him in hond
Well ought vs werche, & idlenesse withstond.

And though men dredden neuer for to die
Yet se men well by reason doubtles
That idlenesse is roote of slogardie
Of which ther cometh neuer no good encres
And sithnes that sloth holdeth hem in a lees
Onely to slepe, and for to eate and drinke
And to deuouren all that other swinke.

And for to put vs from soche idelnesse
That cause is of so great confusion
I haue here doen my faithfull besinesse
After the Legende in translacion
Right of thy glorious life and passion
Thou wͭ thy garlond, wrought wͭ rose & Lely
Thee mean I, maide & martir sainct Cecily.

And thou that art floure of virgins all
Of whom that Bernard list so well to write
To thee at my beginning first I call
Thou comfort of vs wretches, doe me endite
Thy maidẽs deth, yͭ wan through her merite
The eterne life, and of the fende victorie
As men maie after rede in her storie.

Thou maiden & mother, doughter of thy sonne
Thou welle of mercie, sinfull soules cure
In whom yͭ god of bounte chese for to wonne
Thou humble and hie ouer euery creature
Thou noblest, so farre ouer nature
That no disdain the maker had of kinde
His sonne in blood & fleshe to cloth & winde.

Whiche in the cloistre of thy blissfull sidis

Toke mannes shape, the eterne loue and pees
That of the true compas, Lorde and guide is
Whom heauen, yerth, and sea, withouten les
Aie herien, and thou virgine wemles
Bare of thy body, and dwellest maiden pure
The creatour of euery creature.

Assembled is in the magnificence
With mercie, goodnes, and with soche pitee
That thou art the sonne of excellence
Not onely that helpest hem that prayen thee
But often time of thy benignite
Full frely, or that men thine helpe beseche
Thou goest beforne, and art her liues leche.

Now help ỹ blisfull, and meke faire maide
We flemed wretche, in this desert of gall
Thinke on the woman of Canane, that saied
That whelpes eaten some of ỹ crõmes small
That from her Lordes table been ifall
And though ỹ I vnworthy doughter of Eue
Be sinfull, yet accepteth my beleue.

And for that faith is ded withouten werkis
So for to werche, yeue me witte and space
That I be quit frõ the place that most derkis
O that thou art so faire and full of grace
Be mine aduocate in that hie place
There as without ende is song Osanna
Thou Christes mother, & doughter of Anna

And of thy light, my soule in prison light
That troubled is by the contagion
Of my body, and also by the wight
Of yearthly lust, and also false affection
O hauen, O refute, O saluacion
Of hem that been in sorowe and distresse
Now helpe, for to my werke I will me dresse.

yet I praie you that reden that I write
Foryeueth me, that I doe no diligence
This ilke storie subtelly to endite
For both haue I the wordes and the sentence
Of him that at the sainctes reuerence
The storie wrote, and folowen her legende
And praie you that ye wol my werke amende

First will I you the name of sainct Cecily
Expoune, as men maie in her storie se
It is to saie in Englishe, heuens lilly
For pure chastnes of virginite
Or for the witnesse had of honestte
And grene of conscience, and of good fame
The sote sauour Lilly was her name.

Or Cecily is to saie, the waie to blinde
For the ensample was by good teaching
Or els Cecily, as I written finde
Is ioigned by a maner conioigning
Of heauen and Lia, in her figuring
The heauen is set for thought of holinesse
And Lia, for her lasting besinesse.

Cecily maie eke be saied in this manere
Wanting of blindnes, for her great light
Of sapience, and for her thewes clere
Or els Lo, this maidens name bright
Of heauen & Leos cometh, of which by right
Men might the heauen of people her call
Ensample of good and wise werkes all.

For Leos people, in Englishe is to saie
And right as men maie in the heauen se
The Sunne, and Moon, & sterres euery waie
Right so men ghostly, in this maiden se
Sawen of faith, the great magnanimite
And eke the clerenes hole of Sapience
And sondrie werkes, bright of excellence.

And right so as these Philosophers write
That heauen is swift, round, & eke brenning
Right so was faire Cecily the white
Full swift and besie in euery good working
And round and hole in good perseueryng
And brenning euer in charite full bright
Now haue I declared you what she hight.

Here endeth the second Nonnes Prologue, and beginneth her Tale.

This maiden bright Cecile, as her life saith
was comen of Romains and of noble kinde
And so forth forred vp in the faith
Of Christe, and bare his Gospell in her minde
She neuer ceassed, as I written finde
Of her praier, and God to loue and drede
Beseching him to kepe her maidenhede.

And whan this maide should vnto a man
Ywedded be, that was full yong of age
Whiche that icleped was Valerian
And daie was come of her mariage
She full deuout and humble in her corage
Under her robe of gold, that sat full faire
Had next her flesche iclad her in an heire.

And

And whiles that the organs made melodie
To God alone thus in herte song she
O lorde, my soule and eke my body gie
Unwemmed, lest I confounded be
And for his loue that died vpon a tre
Euery second or thirde day she faste
Aye bidding in her orisons full faste.

The night cam, and to bed must she gone
With her husbonde, as often is the manere
And priuely she said vnto him anon
O swete and wel byloued spouse dere
There is a counsaile, and ye wol it here
Which that right faine I wold to you saine
So that ye me ensure, it not to bewraine.

Valerian gan fast vnto her swere
That for no case, ne thing that might be
He should neuer to none bewraien here
And than at erste, thus to him said she
I haue an angel, whiche that loueth me
That wt gret loue, where so I wake or slepe
Is redy aye, my body for to kepe

And if that he may felen out of drede
That ye my touche or loue in vilony
He right anon will slee you with the dede
And in your youth thus shall ye dye
And if that ye in clene loue me gye
He wol you loue as me, for your clennesse
And shewe you of his ioye and brightnesse.

This Valerian, corrected as God wolde
Answerd ayen, if I shal trust the
Let me that aungel se, and him beholde
And if that it a very aungel be
Than wol I done as thou hast prayed me
And if thou loue another man forsothe
Right wt this sword thã wol I slee you bothe

Cecile answerd anon in this wise
If that ye lust, that Angel shul ye se
So that ye trowe on Christ, and you baptise
Goth forth to Via apia (q she)
That frõ this toun ne stante but miles thre
And to the pore folke that there dwell
Say hem right thus, as I shal you tell.

Tel hem that I Cecile, you to hem sende
To shewen you the good Urban the olde
For secret nedes, and for good entent
And whan that ye saint Urban han beholde
Tel him the wordes, that I to you tolde
And whan that he hath purged you fro sinne
Than shal ye se that Angel er ye twinne.

Valerian is to that place igon
And right as him was taught by his lerning
He founde this holy Urban anon
Among these saintes burials louting
And he anon, without tarieng
Did his message, and whan he had it tolde
Urban for ioy, gan his hondes vp holde.

The teres from his eyen let he fall
Almighty God, O Jesu Christ (q he)
Sower of chaste counsaile, hierde of vs all
The frute of thilke sede of chastite
That thou hast sowe in Cecile, take to the
Lo like a besy bee, withouten gile
The serueth aye thine owne thral Cecile

For thilke spouse, that she toke but newe
Ful like a fierse Lion, she sendeth here
As meke as any lambe was to ewe
And with that word, anon there gan apere
An olde man, clad in white clothes clere
That had a boke with letters of gold in hõd
And gan biforne Valerian for to stond.

Valerian as deed fel doun for drede
Whan he this olde man saw standing so
Whiche forthwith anon he herde him rede
O lord, O faith, O God withouten mo
Of Christendome, and father of al also
Abouen al, and ouer al euery where
These wordes al with Gold written were.

Whã this was rad, thã said this olde man
Leuest thou this thing or none, say ye or nay
I leue al this thing (q Valerian)
Under the heuen no wight ne thinke may
Sother thing than this, I dare well say
Tho vanished the olde man, he nist where
And pope Urban him christened right there.

Valerian goth home, and findeth Cecile
Within his chambre, with an aungel stonde
This aungel had of rose and of lillye
Crounes two, the whiche he bare in honde
And first to Cecile, as I vnderstonde
He yaue that one, and after gan he take
That other to Valerian and her make.

With body clene, & wt vnwemmed thoughe
Kepeth aye wel these crounes (q he)
From paradise to you I haue hem brought
Ne neuer more shullen they rotten be
Ne lese her swete sauour, trusteth me
Ne neuer wight shal sene him with eye
But he be chast, and hate vilonie

The second Nonnes tale.

And thou Valerian, for thou so sone
Assentedest to good counsaile also
Say what ȳ list, & thou shalt haue thy bone
I haue a brother (q Valerian tho)
That in this world I loue no man so
I pray you that my brother may haue grace
To knowe the trouth, as I do in this place.

The angel answerd, God liketh your request
And both with the palme of martirdom
Shal ye come vnto the blisfull feest
And w that worde Tiburce his brother come
And whan that he the sauour vndernome
Whiche that the roses and the lilies caste
Within his hert he gan to wonder faste.

And said: I wonder this time of the yere
Whence that this sote sauour cometh so
Of roses and lilies, that I smell here
For though I had him in mine hondes two
The sauour might in me no deper go
The swete smel, that in mine hert I finde
Hath chaunged me al in another kinde.

Valerian said, two crounes haue we
Snowe white & rose reed, that shineth clere
Which that thine eyen han no might to se
And as thou smellest hem thrugh my praiere
So shalt thou seen him my leue brother dere
If it so be that thou wilte without slouthe
Bileue a right, and know the very trouthe.

Tiburce answed, saiest thou this to me
In sothnesse, or in dreme herken I this:
In dremes (q Valerian) han we be
Vnto this time, brother mine iwis
But now at erst, our dwelling in trouth is
How wost thou (q Tiburce) & in what wise
Od Valerian, that I shal the deuise.

The angel of god hath me ȳ trouth itaught
Which thou shalt seen, and thou wilt reney
The idols, and be clene, and els naught
And of the miracles of these crounes twey
Saint Ambrose in his preface lust to sey
Solempnely this noble doctour dere
Commendeth it, and saith in this manere.

The palme of martirdom for to receiue
Seint Cecile, fulfilled of Gods yefte
The world & eke her chambre gan she weiue
Witnesse Tiburce, and Ceciles shrifte
To which God of his bounte wolde shifte
Crounes two, of floures wel smelling
And made the angel hem tho crounes bring
The maid hath brought hem to blisse aboue
The world hath wist what it is worth certain
Deuocion and chastite well for to loue
Tho shewed him Cecile all open and plaine
That alidolles ben but thinges in vaine
For they ben dombe, and therto they ben defe
And charged him his idoles for to lefe.

Who that troweth not this, a beest he is
(Od this Tiburce) if that I shal not lie
She kissed his brest whan she herde this
And was ful glad he couthe trouth espie
This day take I the for mine allie
Said this blisful maiden fayre and dere
For after that she said as ye may here.

Lo right so as the loue of Christ (q she)
Made me thy brothers wife, right in ȳ wise
Anon for mine alye here take I the
Sithens that thou wolt thine idols dispise
Go with thy brother now, and the baptise
And make the clene, so ȳ thou maist beholde
The angels face, of which thy brother tolde

Tiburce answerde, and said: brother dere
First tell me whether I shal, and to what mā
To whom he said, come forth w good chere
I wol the lede vnto the pope Urban
To Urban brother mine Valerian
(Od this Tiburce) wilt thou me thider lede:
Me thinketh that it were a wonder dede

Ne meenest thou not Urban (q he tho)
That is so oft dampned to be deed
And wonneth in halwes to and fro
And dare not ones put forth his heed
Men should him brenne in a fire so reed
If he were founde, and men might him spie
And we also, that bere him companie.

And while we seken thilke diuinite
That is hidde in heuen priuely
Algate ibrent in this world should we be
To whom Cecile answerde boldely
Men might dreede well and skilfully
This life to lese, mine owne dere brother
If this were liuing onely and non other.

But there is better liuing in other place
That neuer shalbe loste, ne dreede the nought
Which goddes son vs told through his grace
That fathers sonne hath al thing wrought
And al ȳ wrought is with a skilfull thought
The goost that from the father gan procede
Hath souled him without any dreede.

By

By word and by miracle, lo goddes sonne
When he was in this worlde, declared here
That there is other life there men may wōne
To whom answerd Tiburce: O suster dere
Ne saidest thou right nowe in this manere
There nas but one god lorde in sothfastnesse
And now of three how may ꝑ here witnesse.

That shal I tel (ꝙ she) or that I go
Right as a man hath sapiences three
Memory, engine, and intellecte also
So in suche beyng of diuinite
Three persons may there right wel be
Tho gan she there ful besily him preche
Of Christes sonne, and of his paines teche

And many pointes of his passion
How Gods sonne in this world was wholde
To do mankinde plaine remission
That was bounde in sinnes and cares colde
Al these thinges she vnto Tiburce tolde
And after this Tiburce in good entent
With Valerian to pope Urban went.

That thonked god, & with glad hert & light
He christened him, & made him in that place
Perfite in his lerning goddes knight
And after this Tiburce gate suche grace
That euery day he saw in time and space
The Aungel of God, and euery maner boone
That he God asken, it was sped ful soone

It were full harde by order for to saine
How many wonders Jesu for him wrought
But at the last, to tell shorte and plaine
The sergeaunt of the toun hem sought
And hem byfore Almache ꝟ prouost brought
Which hem apesed, and knew al her entent
And to the Image of Jupiter hem sent.

And said, who so wol do no sacrifice
Swappe of his heed, this is my sentēce here
Anon these martirs, that I you deuise
One Maximus that was an officere
Of the prefectes, and his councelere
Hem hent, & whan he forth the saintes lad
Him selfe he wepte for pite that he had

Whan Maximus had herd this saintes lore
He gate hem of the turmentours leue
And had hem to his house withouten more
And with her preching, er that it were eue
Thei gon from the turmentour reue
And from Maximus, & from his folke echone
The false faith, to trowen in God alone.

Cecile came, whan it was woxen night
With prestes, that him christened al in tere
And afterward, whan day was woxen light
Cecile hem said with a sober chere
Now Christes own knightes leue and dere
Casteth al away the werkes of derknesse
And armeth you in armour of brightnesse

Ye han forsoth idone a great bataile (serued
Your cours is don, your faith hathe you con-
Goth to the croune of life that maie not faile
The rightful iuge, whiche ye han serued
Shal yeue it you as ye it deserued
And whan this thing was said, as I deuise
Men lad hem forth to done the sacrifice

But whā they were vnto the place ibrought
To tell shortly the conclusioun
They nolde ensence ne sacrifice right nought
But on her knees, they saten hem adoun
With humble herte and sadde deuocion
And losten bothe her heedes in the place
Her soules went to the king of grace.

This Maximus that saw the thing bitide
With pitouse teares tolde it anon right
That he her soules saw to heuen glide
With aungels full of clerenesse and of light
And with his word conuerted many a wight
For whiche Almachius did him so to bete
With whippes of lede, til he his life gan lete

Cecile him tooke, and buried him anon
By Tiburce and Valerian softely
Within her buriyng place vnder a stone
And after this Almachius hastely
Bad his ministers fetchen openly
Cecile, so that she might in his presence
Do sacrifice, and Jupiter encence

But they conuerted at her wise lore
Wepten full sore, and yaue full credence
Unto her worde, and creden more and more
Christ goddes sonne, without difference
Is very God, this is all our sentence
That hath a seruaunt so good him to serue
Thus vp o voice we trow though we sterue

Almachius, that herde al this doyng
Bad fetche Cecile, that he might her se
And alderfirst this was his asking
What maner woman arte thou (ꝙ he)
I am a gentill woman borne (ꝙ she)
I aske of the (ꝙ he) though it the greue
Of thy religion and of thy beleue?

The second Nonnes tale.

Ye haue begon your question folishly
(Qd she) that wolde two answers conclude
In one demaunde, ye alhen leudly
Almachius answerde to that similitude
Of whence cometh thine answere so rude
Of whence (q she) when that we was trained
Of conscience, and of good faith vnfained.

Almachius said, ne takest thou none hede
Of my power: and she him answerde this
Your might (q she) ful litell is to drede
For euery mortall mannes power nis
But lithe a bladder full of winde iwis
For with a nedles point, when it is iblowe
May al the bolle of it be laide full lowe.

Full wrongfully begannste thou (q he)
And yet in wrong is thy perseueraunce
Wolde thou not how our mighty princes fre
Haue thus cõmaunded and made ordinaūce
That euery christen wight shal haue penaūce
But if that he his christendome with sey
And gon al quite, if he wol it reney.

Your princes erren, as your nobles dothe
Qd tho Cecile, in a wode sentence
Ye make vs gilty, and it is not sothe
For ye that knowen wel our innocence
For as muche as we done a reuerence
To Christ, and for we bere a christen name
Ye put on vs a crime and eke a blame.

But we that knowen thilke name so
For vertuous, we may it not withsey
Almachius answerd, chese one of these two
Do sacrifice, or christendome reney
That thou mowe scapen by that wey
At whiche worde the holy blisfull maide
Gan for to laughe, and to the iudge she saide

O iudge confused in thy nicete
Wolt thou that I reney innocence
To make me a wicked wight (q she)
Lo he dissimuleth here in audience
He stareth and woddeth in his aduertence
To whom Almachius said: O sely wretche
Thou wostе not howe farre my might maye (stretche
Hath not our might princes yeuen
To me, bothe power and eke auctorite
To make folke to dien or to liuen:
Why speketh thou so proudly than to me?
I ne spehe it not but stedfastly (q she)
Not proudely, for I say as for my side
I hate deedly thilke vice of pride.

And if thou diede not a sothe for to here
Than wol I shewen al openly by right
That thou hast made a full great leling here
Thou saist thy princes han yeuen the might
Bothe to slee and eke to quicke a wight
Thou ne maiste but onely lyue bireue
Thou hast non other power ne leue.

But thou maist say, thy prices han ỹ maned
Minister of dethe, for if thou spehe of mo
Thou liest, for thy power is full naked
Do way thy boldnesse, saide Almachius tho
And do sacrifice to our goddes er thou go
I recke not what wrong thou me profer
For I can not suffre, as can a philosopher

But thilke wronges may I not endure
That thou spekest of our gods here (q he)
Cecile answerd, O nice creature
Thou saidst no word sithens ỹ spakest to me
That I knewe therwith thy nicite
And that thou were in euery maner wise
A leude officer, and a vaine iustice.

The lacketh nothing to thine vtter eyen
That ỹ nart blind, for thing that we seen all
That is a stone, that men well may aspien
That ilke stone, a God thou wolt it call
I rede the let thine honde vpon it fall
And tast it wel, and stone thou shalte it finde
Sens that ỹ seest not w thin eyen blinde

It is a shame that the people shall
So scorne the, and laugh at thy folye
For comenly men wot it well ouer all
That mighty God is in his heuens hye
And these ymages, wel maiste thou aspie
To the ne to hem selfe may they not profite
For in her effecte, they be not worth a mite.

Thus and suche other wordes said she
And he wore wroth, & bad she should be lede
Home to her house, and in her house (q he)
Bzenne her in a bathe, with flames rede
And as he bad, right so was done the dede
For in a bathe they gan her fast sheten
And night & day great fire vnder they beten.

Al the long night, and eke the day also
For al the fire, and eke the bathes hete
She sat al colde, and felt of it no wo
It made her not a droppe for to swete
But in that bath her life she mote lete
For Almachie, with a ful wicked entent
To sleen her in the bathe, his sonde sent

Thze

Thre strokes in the neche he smote her tho
The turmentour, but for no maner chaunce
He might not smite al her neche a two
And for there was that time an ordinaunce
That no mā shuld do no person such penaūce
The fourth stroke to smite, soft or sore
This turmentour durst smite no more.

But halfe deed, wher neche yeornen there
He left her lye, and on his way he went
The christen folke that aboute her were
With shetes home ful faire her hente
Thre daies liued she in this turmente
And neuer cessed she the faith to teache
That she had fostred hem, she gan to preche

And hem she yaue her mouables & her thing
And to the pope Urban betoke hem tho
And sayd, I asked this of the heuen king
To haue respite thre daies and no mo
To recommaunde to you er that I go
These soules, and that I might so werche
Here of mine house perpetuellichea cherche.

Saint Urban, with his dekens priuely
The body fette, and buried it by night
Among his other saintes honestly
Her house the churche of saint Cecile hight
Saint Urban halowed it, as he wel might
In whiche vnto this day, in noble wise
Men don to Christ and to his saintes seruise.

Here endeth the seconde Nonnes tale, and here beginneth the prologue of the Chanons yeman.

Han ended was the life of saint Cecile
Er we fully had ridden fine mile
At Boughton vnder the blee, vs gan a take
A man, that clothed was in clothes blake
And vnder that he had a white surplise
His hakney, that was all pomely grise
So swette, that it wonder was to se
It semed that he had pricked miles thre
The horse eke that his yoman rode vpon
So swette, that vnneth might he gon
About the paytrell stode the fome ful hye
He was of fome as flecked as a pye
A male twifolde on his croper lay
It semed that he caried litell aray
All light for sommer rode this worthy man
And in my hert wondren I began
What that he was, till I vnderstode
How that his cloke was sewed to his hode
For whiche, when I had longe auised me
I demed him some chanon for to be
His hatte hinge at his backe by a lace
For he had ridden more than trot or pace
He rode aye pricking as he were wode
A clote leke he had laide vnder his hode
For swette, and for to kepe his heed fro hete
But it was ioye for to se him swete
His forehead dropped, as a stillatory
Were ful of plantaine or of peritory
And when he was come, he gan cry
God saue (qꝯ he) this ioly company
Fast haue I pricked (qꝯ he) for your sake
Because that I wolde you ouer take
To ridden in this mery company
His yoman was eke ful of curtesy
And said sirs, nowe in the morowe tide
Out of your hostrie I sawe you ride
And warned here my lorde and soueraine
Whiche that to ridden with you is ful faine
For his disporte, he loueth dalliaunce.
Frēd for thy warning god yeue ẏ good chāce
Then said our host, certaine it wolde seme
Thy lorde were wise, and so I may wel deme
He is ful ioconde also dare I laye
Can he ought tell a mery tale or twaye
With whiche he glade may this companie,
Who sir my lorde? Ye without lie
He can of mirthe and eke of iolite
Not but inough also sir trusteth me
And ye him knewe also wel as do I
Ye would wonder how wel and thriftely
He couthe werke, and that in sondry wise
He hath taken on him many a great empryse
Whiche were ful harde, for any that is here
To bringe aboute, but they of him it lere
As homely as he rideth amonge you
If ye him knew, it wold ben for your prowe
Ye wolde not forgon his aquaincaunce
For mochell good I dare laye in balaunce
All that I haue in my possession
He is a man of hye discression
I warne you wel he is a passing wise man.
Wel (qꝯ our host) I pray the tel me than
Is he a clerke or non? tell what he is.
A clerke, nay he is greter thē a clerke I wis
Said the yoman, and in wordes few
Hoste of his crafte somwhat wol I shewe
I say my lorde can suche a subtelte
But all his craft ye may not wete of me
And somewhat helpe I yet to his werching
That all the grounde that we be on riding
Til we com to Canterbury toune

Ye coulde al clene turne vp and doune
And paue it al of siluer and of golde.
And whan this yoman had thus itolde
Unto our hoste: he saide benedicite
This thing is wonder meruailous to me
Sens that thy lorde is of so hie prudensence
(Bycause of whiche, men shuld him reuerence)
That of his worshipp recketh he so lite
His ouerest sloppe is not worth a mite
As in effecte to him, so mote I go
It is al baudy and to tore also
Why is thy lorde so slothliche I the pray
And is of power better clothes to bey:
If that his dede acorde with thy speche
Tell me that, and that I the beseche.
Why (q this yeman) wherto aske ye me?
God helpe me so, for he shal neuer ythe
But I wol not auowe that I saie
And therfore kepe it secret I you praie
He is to wise in fay, as I beleue
That is ouerdone nil not preue
And right as clerkes saine, it is a vice
Wherfore I holde him in that, leude and nice
For whan a man hath ouer great a wit
Ful ofte it happeth him to misusen it
So doth my lorde, and that me greueth sore
God amende it, I can say you no more.
Therof no force good yeman (q our host)
Sens of the comming of thy lord thou wost
Tel howe he dothe, I pray the hertely
Sens that he is so crafty and so sly
Wher dwellen ye, if it to tell be?
In the suburbes of a toune (q he)
Lurking in hernes and in lanes blinde
Where thefe robers, and theues by kinde
Holden her priuy fearful residence
As they that dare not shewen her presence
So fare we, if that I shal say the soth.
Yet (q our host) let me talke to the
Why art thou so discoloured in thy face?
Peter (q he) God yeue it harde grace
I am so vsed in the hote fire to blowe
That it hath chaūged my colour as I trowe
I am not wont in no mirrour to prie
But swinke sore, and lerne to multiplie
We blondren euer, and poderen in the fire
And for al that, we failen of our desire
For euer we lachen our conclusion
To much folke we do illusion
And borowe we gold, be it a pounde or two
Or ten or twelue, or many summes mo
And make hem wene at the lest way
That of a pounde we coulde make tway
Yet is it false, and aye han we good hope
It for to done, and after it we grope
But that science is so ferre vs bifore
We mowe not al though we had it swore
It ouertake, it flyt away so fast
It wol vs make beggers at the last.
Whiles this yeman was thus in his talking
This Chanō drewe him nere, & herd al thing
Whiche this yeman spake, for suspection
Of mennes speche euer had this Chanon
For Cato saieth, he that gilty is
Demeth al thing be spoken of him iwis
Bicause of that, he gan so nighe to drawe
To his yeman, to herken al his sawe
And thus he said vnto his yeman tho
Holde now thy peace, & spek no wordes mo
For if thou do, thou shalte it sore abie
Thou saundrest me here in this companie
And eke discouerest that thou shuldest hide.
Ye (q our host) tel on what so euer betide
Of al this threting, recche the not a mite.
In faith (q he) no more do I but lite
And whan this Chanon saw it would not be
But his yeman would tel his priuite
He fledde away for very sorowe and shame.
A (q the yeman) here shall rise a game
All that I can, anon wol I you tell
Sens he is gon, the foule fende him quell
For neuer here after, woll I with him mete
For peny ne for pounde, I you behete
He that me brought first vnto that game
Er that he die, sorowe haue he and shame
For it is ernest to me by my faithe
That fele I well, what so any man saithe
And yet for al my smert and al my greue
For al my sorowe, labour and mischefe
I couthe neuer leaue it in no wise
Now wolde God my witte might suffice
To tellen all that longeth to that arte
But natheless, yet woll I tel you a parte
Sens that my lord is gon. I wol not spare
Suche thing as I know I wol declare.

Here endeth the Prologue of the Chanons yeman, and here followeth his tale.

With this chanon I dwelt seuen yere
And of his science I am neuer the nere
Al that I had, I haue lost therby
And God wotte, so hath many mo than I
There I was wonte to be right freshe & gay
Of clothing, and eke of other good aray

Now

Now maie I weare an hose vpon mine hedde
And where my colour was both fresh & redde
Now is it wanne, and of a leaden hewe
Who so it vseth, sore shall him rue
And of my swinke, yet blered is mine iye
Lo whiche auauntage it is to multiplie
That sliding science, hath me made so bare
That I haue no good, where that euer I fare
And yet I am endetted so thereby
Of gold, that I haue borowed truely
That while I liue, I shall it quite neuer
Let euery man beware by me euer
What maner man that casteth him therto
If he continue, I hold his thrift ido
So helpe me God, thereby shall he neuer win
But empte his purse, & make his wittes thin
And whā he, through his madnesse and folie
Hath lost his owne good, through ieopardie
Than he exiteth other men thereto
To lese her good, as himself hath do
For vnto shrewes, ioye it is and ese
To haue her felawes in pain and disese
For thus was I ones learned of a clerke
Of that no charge, I woll speke of our werke
Whan we be there, as we shall exercise
Our eluishe craft, we semen wonder wise
Our termes been so clergiall and so quainte
I blowe the fire, till mine hart faint.
What should I tell eche proporcion
Of thinges, whiche we werchen vpon?
As on fiue or sire vnces, maie well be
Of siluer, or of some other quantite
And besie me to tellen you the names
Of Orpiment, brent bones, yron squames
That into pouder grounden been full small
And in an yearthen potte, how put is all
And salt iput in, and also papere
Bifore these pouders that I speake of here
And well icouered, with a lampe of glas
And of moche other thing that there was
And of the pottes and glas englutyng
That of the aire might passe out nothing
And of the esie fire and smart also
Whiche that was made, & of the care and wo
That we had in our matters subliming
And in amalgaming, and calsening
Of quicksiluer, icleped Mercury crude
For all our sleight, we can not conclude
Our Orpiment, and sublimed Mercurie
Our ground litarge eke on prophirie
Of eche of these, vnces a certain
Not helpeth vs, our labour is in vain
Ne eke our spirites assencion
Ne yet our matters, that lien all sire adoun
Mowe in our werking nothing auaile
For lost is all our labour and our trauaile
And all the cost, a twentie deuill waie
Is lost also, whiche we vpon it laie.
There is also full many an other thing
That is to our craft appertaining
Though I by order hem ne rehearse can
Bicause that I am a leude man
Yet woll I tellen hem, as thei come to minde
Though I ne can set hem in her kinde
As Bole Armoniake, Verdegrece, Borace
And sondrie vessels made of yearth and glas
Our vrinals, and our discensories
Viols, crosettes, and sublimatories
Concurbites, and alembekes eke
And other soche, deare inough a Leke
It nedeth not to rehearce hem all
Waters rubifiyng, and Boles gall
Arsneke, sal Armoniake, and Brimstone
And herbes cold I tell eke many one
As Egremonie, Valerian, and Lunarie
And other soche, if that me list to tarie
Our lampes brenning bothe night and daie
To bringen about our craft, if that we maie
Our fournice eke of calcinacion
And of waters albificacion
Unsleked lime, chalke, and gleire of an eye
Pouders diuers, ashes, dong, pisse, and cleie
Sered pokettes, salt Peter, and Vitriole
And diuers fires, made of wood and cole
Sal Tartre, Alcaly, and sal preparate
And combust matters, and coagulate
Cley made w̄ hors dūg, mans heere, and oile
Of tartre alim, glas, berme, wort, & argoile
Resagor, and other matters enbibing
And eke of our matters encorporing
And of our siluer citrinacion
Our sementing, and eke fermentacion
Our yngottes testes, and many mo.
I woll you tell as was me taught also
The foure spirites, and the bodies seuen
By order, as oft I heard my lorde nemene.
The first spirite quicke siluer cleped is
The second Orpiment, the third iwis
Sal Armoniake, the fourth Brimstone
The bodies seuen eke, lo here hem anone
Sol gold is, and Luna siluer we threpe
Mars yron, Mercury quicke siluer we clepe
Saturnus leade, and Jupiter is Tinne
And Venus Coper, by my father kinne.
This cursed craft, who so woll exercise
He shall no good haue that maie him suffice
For all the good he spendeth there about
He lese shall, thereof haue I no doubt
Who so that listen to vtter his folie
Let him come forth and learne to multiplie

And euery man, that hath ought in his cofer
Let him appere, and were a Philosopher
Alkaunce that craft is so light for to lere
Naie naie God wote, all be he Mõke or Frere
Preest or Chanon, or any other wight
Though he sit at his boke both daie & night
In learning of this eluishe nice lore
All is in vain, and parde moche more
Is to lere a leude man this subtelte
Fie speake not thereof, it will not be
All could he lettrure, or could he nons
As in effect, he shall finde it all one
For bothe two, by my saluacion
Concluden in multiplicacion
Iliche well, whan thei haue all ido
This is to sain, thei failen bothe two
Yet forgate I moche rehearsaile
Of waters corosife, and of limaile
And of bodies mollificacion
And also of her induracion
Oiles, ablusions, metall fusible
To tellen you all, would passe any bible
That O where is, wherefore as for the best
Of all these names now would I rest
For as I trowe, I haue you told inow
To reise a fende, all looke he neuer so row.
A naie let be the Philosophers stone
Alixer cleped, we siken fast echone
For had we him, than were we siker inow
But vnto God of heauen I make auowe
For all our craft, whan that we han all ido
And all our sleight, he will not come vs to
He hath made vs spende moche good
For sorowe of whiche, almost we wexe wood
But that good hope crepeth in our hart
Supposing euer, though we sore smart
To been releued of him afterward
Supposing and hope is sharpe and hard
I wayne you well it is to siken euer
That future temps hath made men diseuer
In trust thereof, all that euer thei had
Yet of that art, thei could not waxe sad
For vnto him it is a bitter swete
So semeth it, for ne had thei but a shete
Which ỹ thei might wrappen hem in a night
And a watte to walken in a daie light
Thei wouldē hem sel, & spend it on this craft
They conne not stint, till nothing be laft
And euermore, where that euer thei gone
Men maie hem ken by smell of Brimstone
For all the worlde thei stinken as a Bote
Her sauour is so Rammishe and so hote
That though a man a mile from hem be
The sauour will enfect him trusteth me
Lo, thus by smelling, & by threde bare araye
If that men list, this folke knowe thei maie
And if a man woll aske him priuely
Why thei be clothed so vnthriftely
Right anon thei woll rowne in his ere
And sain, if that thei aspied were
Men woll hem slea, bicause of her science
Lo thus these folke bitraien innocence
Passe ouer this, I go my tale vnto
Er that the potte be on the fire ido
Of metalles, with a certain quantite
My lorde hem tempereth, and no man but he
Now he is gon, I dare saie boldly
For as men sain, he can doen craftly
Algate I wote well he hath soche a name
And yet full oft he renneth in the blame
And wote ye how, full oft it happeth so
The pot to breaketh, and farwell all is go
These metalles been of so great violence
Our walles maie not make hem resistence
But if thei were wrought of lime and stone
Thei percen so, & through the wall thei gone
And some of hem sinken into the grounde
Thus haue we lost by times many a pounde
And some are scattered all the flore about
Some lepen into the rofe withouten doubt
Tho ỹ the fende not in our sight him shewe
I trowe that he with vs be, that ilke shrewe
In hell where that he is lorde and sire
Ne is there no more wo, ne angre ne ire
Whan that our pot is broke, as I haue saied
Euery man chite, and holte him iuell apaied
Some saied it was long of the fire making
Some saied naie, it was on the blowing
Than was I ferde, for that was mine office
Straw (ꝙ the third) ye been leude and nice
It was not tempred as it ought to be.
Naie (ꝙ the fourth) stint and herken me
Bicause our fire was not made of Beche
That is the cause, and none other so theche
I can not tell whereon it is along
But well I wot great strief is vs emong.
What (ꝙ my lorde) there nis no more to doen
Of these perilles I woll be ware eft sone
I am right siker, that the potte was crased
Be as be maie, be ye not amased
As vsage is, let swepe the floore as swithe
Pluche vp your hart, and be glad and blithe.
The mulloche on an heape iswept was
And on the floore cast a canuas
And all this mulloke in a Siue ithrowe
And isifted and ipluched many a throwe.
Parde (ꝙ one) somwhat of our metall
Yet is there here, though we haue not all
And tho this thing mishapped hath as now
In other time it maie been well inow

we mote put our good in auenture
A Marchaunt parde, maie not aie endure
Trusteth me well in his prosperitee
Somtime his good is drouned in the see
And somtime it cometh safe vnto the londe.
Peace (q̄ my lorde) & next time I wol fonde
To bring our craft all in an other plite
And but I doe sirs, let me haue the wite
There was default in somwhat well I wote
In other saied, the fire was ouer hote
But be it hote or cold, I dare saie this
That we concluden euer more a mis
We failen of that whiche we would haue
And in our madnesse euermore we raue
And whan we be togither euerichone
Euery man semeth as wise as Salomon
But al thing, which that shineth as the gold
Is not gold, as I haue heard told
Ne euery appell that is faire at eye
Is not good, what so men clappe or crie
Right so it fareth emong vs
He that semeth the wisest by Jesus
Is moste foole, whan it cometh to the prefe
And he that semeth truest is a thefe
That shall ye know e, er that I frō you wende
By that I of my tale haue made an ende.
There was a Chanon of Religioun
Emonges vs, would enfect all a toun
Though it as greate were as Ninine
Rome, Alisaundre, Troie, and other thre
His sleight and his infinite falsnesse
There couth no man writen as I gesse
Though that he might liue a thousande yere
In all this worlde of falsnesse nis his pere
For in his termes he woll him so winde
And speake his wordes in so slie a kinde
Whan he comen shall with any wight
That he woll make him dote anon right
But it a fende be as himself is
Full many a man hath he begiled er this
And mo woll, if that he maie liue a while
And yet men riden and gone ful many a mile
Him for to seke, and haue aquaintaunce
Not knowing of his false gouernaunce
And if ye lust to giue me audience
I woll it tellen here in your presence.
But worshipfull Chanons religious
Ne deemeth not that I sclaunder your hous
Although my tale of a Chanon be
Of euery order some shrewe is parde
And God forbid that all a companie
Should rue a singuler mannes folie
To slaunder you is not mine entent
But to correct that misse is ment
This tale was not onely told for you
But eke for other mo, ye wote well how
That emong Christes Apostles twelue
There was no traitour but Judas him selue
Than why should the remnaunt haue blame
That giltelesse were, by you I saie the same
Saue onely this, if ye woll herken me
If any Judas in your couent be
Remeueth him betime, I you rede
If shame or losse maie causen any drede
And be nothing displeased I you praie
But in this case herketh what I saie.

IN London was a priest annuellere
That therein had dwelt many a yere
Which was so plesant & so seruiable
Unto the wife, where he was at table
That he would suffer him nothing to paie
For borde ne clothing, went he neuer so gaie
And spending siluer had he right inow
Therof no force, I woll procede as now
And tell forth my tale of the Chanon
That brought this priest to confusion
This false Chanon came vpon a daie
Unto this priestes chamber, where he laie
Beseching him to lene him a certain
Of gold, and he would quite him ayen
Leneth me a Marke (q̄ he) but daies three
And at my daie I woll quite it thee
And if it so be, that thou finde me false
An other daie hang me by the halse
This priest tok him a marke, & that swith
And this Chanon him thanked oft sith
And tok his leue, and went forth his wey
And at third daie brought his money
And to this priest he tok this gold ayen
Whereof this priest was glad and fain
Certes (q̄ he) nothing anoieth me
To lene a man a noble, two or three
Or what thing were in my possession
Whan he so true is of condicion
That in no wise he breake woll his daie
To such a man I can neuer saie naie.
What q̄ this Chanon, should I be vntrue
Naie, that were thing fallen of new
Trouth is a thing that I woll euer kepe
Unto the daie, in whiche I shall crepe
Into my graue, or els God forbede
Beleueth this as sikker as your crede
God thanke I, and in good time be it saied
That there nas neuer man yet ill apaied
For gold ne siluer that he to me lent
Ne neuer falshede in mine harte I ment.
And sir (q̄ he) now of my priuite
Sens ye so goodlich haue been to me
And kith to me so greate gentilnesse

Somwhat

Som what to quite with your kindnesse
I woll you shewe, if ye woll it lere
(I shall it shewe to you anon right here)
How I can werche in Philosophie
Taketh good hede, ye shall it se with your ye
That I woll doe a maistrie or I go.
ye sir (q the priest) and woll ye so
Mary therof I praie you hartely.
At your commaundement sir truely
(q the Chanon) and els God forbede
Lo how this these couth his seruice bede
Full soth it is that soche profered seruice
Stinketh, as witnesseth the old wise
And that full sone I woll it verifie
In this Chanon, rote of all trecherie
That euermore delite hath and gladnesse
Soche fendly thoughtes in his hart empresse
How christes people he may to mischef bring
God kepe vs from his false dissimuling.
What wist this priest w whō that he delt
Ne of his harme comming nothing he felt
O sely priest, O sely innocent
With couetise anon thou shalt be blent
O graceless, full blind is thy conceite
Nothing art thou ware of his disceite
Whiche that this fore hath shapen to thee
His wilie wrenches thou maiest not flee
Wherefore to go to the conclusion
That referreth to thy confusion
Unhappie man, anon I woll me hie
To tell thine vnwitte ne thy folie
And eke the falsnesse of that other wretche
As ferforth as my conning woll stretche
This Chanō was my lorde ye would wene
Sir hoste in faith, and by the heauen Quene
It was an other Chanon, and not he:
That can an hundred folde more subtelte
He hath betraied folke many a time
Of his falsnesse it doleth me to rime
Euer whan I speake of his falshede
For shame of him, my chekes waren rede
Algates thei beginnen for to glowe
For rednesse haue I none, right well I know
In my vilage, for fumes diuerce
Of metals, whiche ye haue heard me reherce
Consumed and wasted hath my rednesse
Now take hede of this Chanons cursednesse.
Sir (q he) to the priest, let your man gon
For quicksiluer, that we it had anon
And let him bring vnces two or three
And whan he cometh, as fast shull ye se
A wonder thing, whiche ye saw neuer er this
Sir (q the priest) it shall be doen i wis
He bad his seruaunt fetche him this thing
And he all redy was at his bidding
And went him forth, and came anon again
With this quicke siluer, shortly for to sain
And toke these vnces three to the Chanoun
And he hem laied well and faire adoun
And bad the seruaunt coles for to bring
That he anon might go to his werking.
The coles right anon wer ifet
And this Chanon toke out a crosselet
Of his bosome, and shewed it to the priest
This instrumēt (q he) whiche that thou seest
Take in thy hond, and put thy self therin
Of this quicksiluer an vnce and begin
In the name of Christ to were a Philosopher
There be full fewe, whiche I would it profer
To shewe hem so moche of my science
For here shull ye se by experience
That this quicksiluer I woll mortifie
Right in your sight anon withouten lie
And make it as good siluer and as fine
As there is any in your purse or mine
Or els where, and make it malliable
And els hold me false and vnstable
Emonges folke euer to appere.
I haue a pouder, that cost me dere
Shall make all good, for it is cause of all
My conning, whiche I you shewe shall
Voideth your man, and let him be thereout
And shet the doore, whiles we been about
Our priuetie, that no man vs espie
Whiles that we werken in our Philosophie.
All as he bad, fulfilled was in dede
This ilke seruaunt anon out yede
And his maister shet the doore anon
And to her labour spidily thei gon
This priest at this cursed Chanōs bidding
Upon the fire anon set this thing
And blewe the fire, and besied him full fast
And this Chanon into this crosset cast
A pouder, I not whereof it was
I made, either of chalke, yearth, or glasse
Or som what els, was not worth a flie
To blind with the priest, and bad him hie
These coles for to couchen all aboue
The crosselet, for in token that I thee loue
(q this Chanon) thine hondes two
Shall werke all thing that here shall be do.
Graūt mercie (q the priest) & was full glad
And couched coles, as the Chanon bad
And while he besy was, this fendly wretche
This false Chanon the foule fende him fetch
Out of his bosome toke a Bechen cole
In whiche full subtelly was made an hole
And therein was put of siluer limaile
An vnce, and stopped was without faile
The hole with waxe, to hepe the limaile in

And vnderstandeth that this false gin
Was not made there, but it was made bifore
And other thinges that I shall you tell more
Hereafter, which that he with him brought
Er he came there, to begile him he thought
And so he did, or thei went a twinne
Till he had tourned him, could he not blinne
It dulleth me, whan that I of him spekе
On his falshede, fain would I me wrekе
If I wist how, but he is here and there
He is so variaunt, he bideth no where.
But taketh hede sirs now for Gods loue
He toke his cole, of whiche I spake aboue
And in his honde he bare it priuely
And whiles the priest couched beside
The coles, as I told you er this
This Chanon saied, frende ye doen amis
This is not couched as it ought to be
But sone I shall amende it (q he)
Now let me medle therewith but a while
For of you haue I pite by sainct Gile
Ye been right hotte, I se well how ye swete
Haue here a clothe and wipe awaie the wete
And while the priest him wiped hace
This Chanon toke the cole, I shrewe his face
And laied it abouen apon the midward
Of the crosset, and blewe well afterward
Till that the coles gon fast bren.
Now yeue vs drinke, q this Chanon then
As swithe all shall be well I vndertake
Sit we doune, and let vs mery make
And whan this Chanons Bechen cole
Was brent all, the limaile out of the hole
Into the crosselet anon fell adoun
And so it must nedes by reasoun
Sens it so euen aboue couched was
But thereof wist the priest nothing, alas
He demed all the coles liche good
For of the sleight, nothing he vnderstood.
And whan this Alkamister sawe his time
Reiseth vp sir priest (q he) and stondeth by me
And for I wote well ingot haue I none
Goth walketh forth, and bring a chalke stone
For I woll make it of thesame shappe
That an ingot is, if I maie haue happe
And bring eke with you a bolle or a panne
Full of water, and ye shall se than
How that our besines shall hap and preue
And yet for ye shall haue no misbeleue
Ne wrong conceite of me in your absence
I woll not been out of your presence
But go with you, and come with you again.
The chamber doore, shortly to sain
Thei opened and shet, and wēt forth her weie
And forth with hem thei caried thei keie
And comen ayen withoutten any delaie
What should I tary all the long daie
He toke the chalke, and shope it in the wise
Of an yngont, as I shall you deuise.
I saie he toke out of his own sleue
A teine of siluer, iuell mote he cheue
Whiche that was but an vnce of weight
And taketh hede now of his cursed sleight
He shope his yngot, in length and in brede
Of the teine, withouten any drede
So slily that the priest it not aspide
And in his sleue again he gan it hide
And from the fire toke vp his matere
And into the yngot it put with mery chere
And into the water vessell he it cast
Whan that him list, and bad the priest as fast
Loke what there is, put in thin honde & grope
Thou shalt finde there siluer as I hope
What diuell of hell should it els be?
Shauing of siluer, siluer is parde.
He put in his honde, and toke vp a teine
Of siluer fine, and glad in euery vaine
Was this priest, whan he sawe it was so
Gods blessing and his mothers also
And all Hallowes, haue ye sir Chanon
Saied this priest, and I her malison
But and ye vouchsafe to teache me
This noble craft and this subtelte
I woll be yours, in all that euer I maie
q the Chanon, yet woll I make assaie
The second time, that ye mow take hede
And been expert of this, and in your nede
An other daie assaie in mine absence
This discipline, and this craftie science
Let take an other vnce (q he) tho
Of quicksiluer, withouten wordes mo
And doen therwith, as I haue doen er this
With that other, whiche that now siluer is
The priest him beseth in all that he can
To doen as this Chanon, this cursed man
Commaunded him, and fast blewe the fire
For to come to the effect of his desire
And this Chanon, right in the meane while
All redy was, this priest eft to begile
And for a countinaunce in his honde bare
An halowe sticke, take hede and beware
In thende of whiche an vnce and no more
Of siluer limaile put was all before
Was in his cole, and stopped with waxe wele
For to kepen in his limaile euery dele
And whiles this priest was in his businesse
This Chanon with his sticke gan him dresse
To him anon, and his pouder cast in
As he did erst, the deuill out of his skin
Him torne, I praie to God for his falshede

For he was euer falſe in thought and dede
And with his ſticke, aboue the croſſelet
That was ordained with that falſe iet
He ſtirreth the coles, till all relent gan
The ware again the fire, as euery man
But he a foole be, wote well it mote nede
And all that in the hole was, out yede
And into the croſſelet haſtely it fell

The Prieſt ſuppoſed nothing but well
But beſied him faſt, and was wonder fain
Suppoſyng nought but trouth, ſoth to ſain
He was ſo glad, that I can not expreſſe
In no maner his mirth and his gladneſſe
And to the Chanon he profered eft ſone
Body and good: ye (q the Chanon) anone
Tho I be poore, craftie thou ſhalt me finde
I warne thee yet is there more behinde
Is there any Coper here within ſaied he?
ye ſir (q the Prieſt) I trowe there be.
Eis go buie ſome, and that aſwithee?
Now good ſir go forth thy waie and hithe.

He wēt his waie, and ẅ the coper he came
And this Chanon in his honde it name
And of that coper waied out but an vnce
All to ſimple is my tong to pronounce
As to miniſter of my wit the doubleneſſe
Of this Chanon, rote of all curſedneſſe
He ſemed frendly, to hem ẏ knew him nought
But he was fendly, both in werke & thought
It werieth me to tell of his falſeneſſe
And natheles, yet woll I it expreſſe
To the entent that men maie beware therby
And for none other cauſe truely.

He put this vnce of coper into the croſſelet
And on the fire as ſwithe he hath it ſet
And caſt in pouder, & made the prieſt to blow
And in his working for to ſtoupe low
As he did erſt, and all nas but a iape
Right as him liſt, the prieſt he made his Ape
And afterward in the ingot he it caſt
And in the panne put it at the laſt
Of water, and in he put his owne hond
And in his ſleue, as ye bifore hond
Heard me tell, he had a ſiluer teine
He ſlily tooke it out, this curſed heine
Unwiting this prieſt of his falſe craft
And in the pannes botome he hath it laft
And in the water rombleth to and fro
And wonder priuely tooke vp alſo
The coper teine, not knowing this prieſt
And hid it, and hent him by the breſt
And to him ſpake, and thus ſaid in his game
Stoupeth adoune, by God ye be to blame
Helpeth me now, as I did you whilere
Put in your hond, and loketh what is there.

This prieſt tok vp this ſiluer teine anon
And than ſaied the Chanon, let vs gon
With theſe thre teines, whiche we hā wrouzt
To ſome Goldſmith, and wete if it be ought
For by my faith, I nold for my hood
But if it were ſiluer fine and good
And that as ſwithe proued ſhall be.

Unto the Goldſmith, with theſe teines thre
Thei went, and put them in aſſaie
To fire and hammer, might no man ſaie naie
But thei wer as them ought for to be.

This ſotted prieſt, who was gladder thā he
Was neuer birde gladder ayenſt the daie
Ne Nightingale, ayenſt the ſeaſon of Maie
Was neuer none, that liſt better to ſing
Ne lady luſtier in carolling
And for to ſpeake of loue and womanhede
Ne knight in armes, to doen a hardy dede
To ſtonden in grace of his lady dere
Than had this Prieſt, this craft to lere
And to the Chanon, thus he ſpake, and ſaid
For the loue of God, that for vs all deid
And as I maie deſerue it vnto you
What ſhall this receit coſt, telleth me now?

By our lady (q this Chanon) it is dere
I warne you well, ſaue I and a Frere
In Englande, there can no man it make.

No force (q he) now ſir for Gods ſake
What ſhall I paie, tell me I you praie.

I wis (q he) it is full dere I ſaie
Sir at one worde, if that ye liſt it haue
Ye ſhall paie fourtie pound, ſo God me ſaue
And nere the frendſhip that ye did er this
To me, ye ſhould paie more iwis.

This prieſt ẏ ſomme of fourtie pound anon
Of nobles fet, and told hem euerichon
To this Chanon, for this ilke receite
All his worching was fraude and deceite.

Sir prieſt he ſaid, I kepe for to haue no loos
Of my craft, for I would it wer kept cloos
And as you loue me, kepeth it ſecre
For and men knowe all my ſubtelte
By God men would haue ſo great enuie
To me, bicauſe of my Philoſophie
I ſhould be dedde, there wer non other waie

God it forbid (q the prieſt) what ye ſaie
Yet had I leuer ſpend all the good
Whiche that I haue, and els ware I wood
Than that ye ſhould fallen in ſoche miſchefe
For your good will haue ye right good prefe
(q the Chanon) and farewell graunt mercie
He went his waie, & neuer the prieſt him ſeie
After that daie: & whā that this prieſt ſhould
Maken aſſaie, at ſoche time as he would
Of this receite, farwell it nold not be

Lo thus be iaped and begiled was he
Thus maketh he his introduction
To bring folke to her distruction.
Considereth sirs, howe in eche estate
Betwixt men and gold is debate
So sertoyth, that vnnethes there is none
This moultiplying blindeth so many one
That in good faith, I trowe that it be
The grettest cause of such scarsite
These philosophers spoken so mistily
In this craste, that men can not come therby
For any wit that men haue nowe a daies
They may well chattre & iangle as do ỹ iayes
And in her termes, set her lust and paine
But to her purpose shul they neuer attaine
A man may lightly lerne, if he haue ought
To multiplie, and bring his good to nought
Lo, suche a lucre is in this lusty game
A mans mirth it wol turne all to grame
And empten also great and heuy purses
And maken folke to purchase curses
Of hem that han also her good ilente
O fye for shame, thei that han be brente
Alas, can not thei flie the fires hete
ye that it vsen, I rede that ye it lete
Lest ỹ ye lesen al, for better than neuer is late
Neuer to thriue, were to longe a date
Though ỹ ye prolle aye, ye shall it neuer find
Ye ben as bolde as is bayarde the blind
That blõdereth forth, & peril casteth he none
He is as bolde to renne ayenst a stone
As for to go beside in the way
So faren ye, that multiplien I say
If that your eien can not sene a right
Loketh that your minde lacke not his sight
For though ye loke neuer so brode and stare
Ye shall not winne a mite in that chaffare
But wast al that ye may repe and renne
Withdrawe the fire, leste it to faste brenne
Medleth with that art no more I mene
For if ye done, your thrift is gon full clene
And right as swithe I wol you tellen here
What ỹ the philosophers sain in this matere
Lo thus saith Arnolde of the newe toun
As his rosarie maketh mencioun
He saith right thus, withouten any lie
There may no man Mercurie mortifie
But if it be with his brothers knowleging
Lo how that he, which first said this thing
Of Philosophers father was, Hermes
He saith how the dragon doutles
Ne dieth not, but if he be slaine
With his brother: And this is for to saine
By the dragon Mercury, and none other
He vnderstode ỹ brimstone was his brother
That out of Sol and Luna were idrawe
And therfore said he, take hede to my sawe
Let no man belie him this arte for to seche
But he that the entencion and speche
Of Philosophers vnderstonde can
And if he do, he is a leude man
For this science, and this conning (q̃ he)
Is of the secre of the secres parde.
Also there was a disciple of Plato
That on a time said his maister to
As his boke Semor wol bere witnesse
And this was his demaunde in sothfastnesse
Tell me the name of the priuy stone.
And Plato answerd vnto him anone
Take the stone that Titanos men name.
which is that (q̃ he) Magnatia is the same
Said Plato: ye sir and is it thus?
This is ignotum per ignotius
what is Magnatia, good sir I you pray.
It is a water that is made I say
Of elementes four (q̃ Plato)
Tel me the roche good sir (q̃ he tho)
Of that water, if it be your will.
Nay nay (q̃ Plato) certaine that I nill
The Philosophers were ifworne echone
That they shuld discouer it vnto none
Ne in no boke it write in no manere
For vnto Christ it is so lefe and dere
That he wol not that it discouered be
But where it liketh to his deite
Man to enspire and eke for to defende
Whan that him liketh, lo this is his ende.
Than conclude I thus, sens ỹ god of heuen
Ne will not that the philosophers nemen
How that a man shal come vnto this stone
I rede as for the beste, let it gone
For who so maketh God his aduersary
As for to werche any thing in contrary
Vnto his wil certes neuer shal he thriue
Though that he multeply terme of his liue
And there a pointe, for ended is my tale
God sende euery true man bote of his bale.

Here endeth the tale of the Chanons yeman, and here folowe th the doctour of phisikes Prologue.

Whan this yeman his tale ended had
Of this false Chanon, whiche was so bad
Our hoste gan say, truely and certaine
This priest was begiled, soth for to saine

He wening for to be a Philosopher
Til he right no golde left in his cofer
And sothly this priest had all ther iape
This cursed Chanon put in his hoode an ape
But al this passe I ouer as now
Sir doctour of phisicke, yet I pray you
Tel vs a tale of some honest matere
It shal be done, if that ye wol it here
Said this doctour, and his tale bygan anon
Now good men (q̃ he) herkeneth euerichon.

¶ Here endeth the doctour of Phisikes prologue, and here beginneth his tale.

THere was, as telleth vs Titus Liuius
A knight, ẏ cleped was Virginius
Fulfilled of honour and of worthinesse
And strong of frendes, & of richesse.
A doughter he had by his wife
And neuer had he mo in all his life
Fayre was this maide in excelent beaute
Abouen euery wight that man may se
For nature hath, with soueraine deligence
Formed her in so great excellence
As though she would say, lo I nature
Thus can I forme and painte a creature
Whan that me liste, who can me counterfete
Pigmaliõ not, though he alway forge & bete
Or graue or painte, for I dare well saine
Appelles, or zeusis, should werche in vaine
To graue or painte, or forge or bete
If they presumed me to counterfete
For he that is the fourmer principal
Hath made me his vicar generall
To fourme and painte erthly creaturis
Right as me liste, for al thing in my cure is
Under the moone, that may wane and waxe
And for my werke, nothing wol I axe
My lorde and I ben fully of acorde
I made her to the worship of my lorde
So do I all mine other creatures
Of what colour they be, or of what figures
Thus semeth me that nature would say.
This maide was of age. xii. yere and tway
In whiche that nature hath suche delite
For right as she can paint a lilye white
And rody as rose, right with suche painture
She painted hath this noble creature
Er she was borne, vpon her limmes fre
Were als brighte as soche colours shoulde be
And Phebus died had her tresses grete
Like to the stremes of his burned hete
And if that excellent were her beaute
A thousande folde more vertuous was she
In her ne lacketh no condicion
That is to preise, as by discrecion
As wel in body as in goste, chaste was she
For which she floured in virginite
With al humilite and abstinence
With al attemperaunce, and pacience
With mesure eke, and bering of aray
Discrete she was in answering alway
Tho she were wise as Pallas, dare I saine
(Her faconde eke, full womanly and plaine)
No counterfetted termes had she
To seme wise: but after her degre
She spake, and all her wordes more and lesse
Sowning in vertue and in gentilnesse
Shamefast she was, in maidẽs shamfastnesse
Constant in hert, and euer in businesse
To driue her out of all slogardrie
Bacchus had of her mouthe no maistrie
For wine and youth done Venus encrece
As men in fyre wol casten oyle or grece
And of her owne vertue vnconstrained
She hath ful ofte her sicke ifained
For that she would flie the company
Where likely was to treten of foly
As is at festes, at reuels, and at daunces
That ben occasions of daliaunces
Suche thinges maken children for to be
To sone repe and bolde, as men may se
Whiche is ful perilous, and hath ben yore
For al to sone may she lerne lore
Of boldenesse, when she is a wife.
And ye maistresses in your olde life
That lordes doughters han in gouernaunce
Ne taketh of my worde no displesaunce
Thinke that ye ben set in gouerninges
Of lordes doughters, onely for two thinges
Either for you han kepte your honeste
Either ye han fall in freelte
And knowen well inough the olde daunce
And conne forsake fully mischaunce
For euermore, therfore for Christes sake
Kepeth wel tho that ye vndertake.
A thefe of veneson that hath forlafte
His likerousnesse and al his theues crafte
Can kepe a forest beste of any man
Now kepeth hem wel, for and ye wol ye can
Loketh well, to no vice that ye assent
Lest ye be dampned for your euill entent
For who so dothe, a traytour is certain
And taketh kepe of that I shall you sain
Of al treyson soueraine pestilence

Is,

Is, when a wight betraieth innocence
ye fathers, and ehe ye mothers also
Though ye han children, be it one or mo
Yours is the charge of al her sufferaunce
whiles they ben in your gouernaunce
Beth ware, that by ensample of your liuing
Eyther by your negligence in chastising
That they ne periche: for I dare wel say
If that they don, ye shal ful sore obay
Under a shepherde softe and negligent
The wolf hath many a shepe & lambe to rent
Sufficeth one ensample now as here
For I mote turne ayen to my matere.
This maide of which I tel my tale expresse
She kepte her selue, she neded no maistresse
For in her liuing maidens might rede
As in a boke, euery good worke and dede
That longeth to a maide vertuous
She was so prudent and so bounteous
For whiche out spronge on euery side
Bothe of her beaute and of her bounte wide
That thorow ỹ londe they preised her echon
That loued vertue, saue enuy alone
That sory is of other mennes wele
And glad is of her sorowe, and vnhele
The doctour maketh this discripcion
This maide went on a day into the toun
Toward the temple, with her mother dere
As is of yonge maidens the manere.
Now was there a iustice in the toun
That gouernour was of that region
And so befel, this Justice his eyen cast
Upon this maide, auising her ful fast
As she came forby, ther as the Judge stode
Anon his hert chaunged and his mode
So was he caught w̄ beaute of this maide
And to him selfe ful preuely he saide
This maide shal be mine for any man
Anon the fende into his hert ran
And taught him sodainly, by what sleighe
The maide to his purpose winne he might
For certes, by no force, ne by no mede
Him thought he was not able for to spede
For she was stronge of frendes, and eke she
Confirmed was in suche soueraine beaute
That well he wist he might her neuer winne
As for to make her w[illegible] her body sinne
For whiche with great deliberacion
He sent after a client into the toun
The whiche he knew ful subtill and ful bold
This iudge vnto this cliēt his tale hath told
In secrete wise, and made him to ensure
He shuld tell it vnto no creature
And if he did, he should lese his hede
When assented was this cursed rede
Glad was the iudge, and made good chere
And yaue him giftes precious and dere.
When shapen was al this conspiracie
Fro point to point, how that his lecherie
Parfourmed should be full subtelly
As ye shullen after here openly
Home gothe this client ỹ hight Claudius
This false iudge, that hight Appius
So was his name, for it is no fable
But knowen for an historiall thing notable
The sentence of it sothe is out of dout
This false iudge gothe now fast about
To hasten his delite, al that he may
And so bifel, that sone after on a day
This false iudge, as telleth vs the storie
As he was wonte, sate in his consistorie
And yaue his domes vpon sondry caas
This false client came forth a ful gret paas
And said lorde, if it be your will
As doth me right vpon this pitous bill
In whiche I plaine vpon Virginius
And if he wol say it is not thus
I wol proue it, and finde good witnesse
That sothe is, that my bill wol expresse
The iudge answerd, of this in his absence
I may not yeue difinite sentence
Let do him call, and I woll gladly here
Thou shalt haue right, and no wronge here
Virginius came to wete the iudges will
And right anon was radde this cursed bill
The sentence of it, was as ye shall here.
To you my lorde Appius so dere
Sheweth your poore seruaunt Claudius
How that a knight called Virginius
Ayenst the lawe, and ayenst al equite
Holdeth expresse ayenst the will of me
My seruant, which that is my thral by right
Which from mine hous was stolē on a night
Whiles she was full yonge, I wol it prue
By witnesse lord, so that ye you not greue
She is not his doughter, what so he say
Wherfore my lorde iustice I you pray
Yelde me my thral, if it be your will
Lo this was al the sentence of that bill.
Virginius gan vpon the client beholde
But haskely, er he his tale tolde
He would haue defended it, as shuld a knight
And by witnesse of many a trewe wight
That al was false, that said his aduersary
This cursed iudge would no lenger tary
Ne here a worde more of Virginius
But yaue his iudgement, and said thus.
I deme anon this client his seruaunt haue
Thou shalt no lenger her in thine house saue
Go bring her forth, and put her in our warde

The doctour of Phisickes tale.

This cliēt shal haue his dyal, thus I award
And when this worthy knight Virginius
Through the assent of the iudge Appius
Must by force his dere doughter yeuen
Unto the iudge, in lechery to liuen
He gothe him home, and set him in his hall
And sette anon his dere doughter call
And with face deed as ashen colde
Upon her humble face he gan beholde
With fathers pite, sticking through his hert
Al wolde he not from his purpose conuert.
Doughter (q he) Virginia by thy name
There ben two wayes, either deth or shame
That thou muste suffer, alas ý I was borne
For neuer thou deseruedest wherfore
To dien, with a swerde or with a knife
Oh dere doughter, comfort of my life
Whiche I haue fostred vp with such plesaūce
That thou ne were out of my remembraunce
O doughter, which that art my last wo
And in my life my laste ioye also
O iemme of chastite, in pacience
Take thou thy dethe this is my sentence
For loue and not for hate thou muste be deed
My pitous honde mote smite of thine heed
Alas that euer Appius the ley
Thus hath he falsely iudged thee to dey
And tolde her al the case, as ye before
Han herd, it nedeth not to tell it more.
O mercy dere father (q this maide)
And with that word, both her armes laide
Aboute his necke, as she was wonte to do
The teeres brast out of her eyen two
And sayd, O good father shal I die
Is there no grace, is there no remedie?
No certes dere doughter mine (q he)
Than yeue me leaue father mine (q she)
My deathe to complaine a litel space
For parde, Iepte yaue his doughter grace
For to complaine, er he her slough, alas
And God it wot, nothing was her trespas
But that she ranne her father first to se
To welcome him, with great solempnite
And with that word she fel a swoune anon
And after whan her swouning was gon
She riseth vp and to her father sayde
Blissed be God that I shall die a mayde
Yeue me my deth, er that I haue a shame
Doth with your child your wil a gods name
And with that word, she praieth him ful ofte
That with his swerd he should smit her softe
And with that word, a swoune doune she fell
Her father with sorouful hert and fell
Her heed of smote, and by the toppe it hente
And to the iudge he it yaue in presente
As he sat in dome in consistorie.
Whan the iudge it sawe, as saith the storie
He bad take him, and honge him also fast
But right anon al the people in thrast
To saue the knight, for routh and for pite
For knowen was the iudges iniquite
The people anon had suspecte in this thing
By maner of this clientes chalenging
That it was by the assent of Appius
They wist wel that he was lecherous
For whiche vnto Appius they gon
And kesten him in prison right anon
Where as he slewe him selfe, and Claudius
That seruaunt was vnto this Appius
Was demed for to be honged vpon a tre
But Virginius, of his great pite
So prayed for him, that he was exiled
And els certes he had ben begiled
The remnaunt were honged, more and lesse
That consented were to his cursidnesse.
Here may men se how sin hath his merite
Beware, for no man wot how god wol smite
In no degre, ne in no maner wise
The worme of conscience wol arise
Of wicked life, though it so priuy be
That no man wote of it but God and he
Whether he be leude man or lered
He not how sone he may ben afered
Therfore I rede you this counsaile take
Forsake sinne, or sinne you forsake

¶ Here endeth the doctour of Phisikes tale, and foloweth the wordes of the hoste.

Our Host gan swere as he were woode
Harowe (q he) by nayles and by bloode
This was a false theef, and a cursed iustice
As shamefull dethe, as herte may deuise
Come to the iustice and her aduocas
Algate this sely maiden is slaine, alas
Alas to dere abought she her beaute
Wherfore I say, that all men may se
That yeftes of fortune, or of nature
Ben cause of dethe of many creature
Her beaute was her dethe, I dare wel saine
Alas so pitously as she was slaine
But herof wol I not procede as nowe
Men haue full ofte more harme than prowe
But truely mine owne maister dere
This is a petous tale for to here
But natheles, passe ouer is no force

I pray

I pray to God to saue thy gentle corce
And thy dynalles, and thy iordanes
Thine ypocras, and eke thy galianes
And euery bore ful of ietuarie
God blesse hem and our lady saint Marie
So mote I the, thou arte a proper man
And lyke a prelate by saint Runian
Saue that I can not speke wel in terme
But wel I wote, thou dost min hert to yerne
That I haue almost icaught a cardiacle
By corpus domini, But I haue triacle
Or els a draught of moiste corncre ale
Or but I here anon a nother mery tale
My hert is lotte, for pite of this maide.
Thou belamy, thou John pardoner he saide
Tel vs some mery tale, or iape, right anon.
It shal be don (quod he) by saint Runion
But first (quod he) here at this ale stake
I woll bothe drinke, and eate of a cake
But right anone, these gentels gon to crye
Nay, let him tell vs of no rebaudrye
Tel vs som mortal thing, that we mow lere
Some witte, and than wol we gladly here
I graunt (quod he) iwis, but I mote thinke
On some honest thing, whiles ỳ I drinke.

Here endeth the wordes of the host, and here foloweth the prologue of the Pardoner.

Ordinges (quod he) in chyrch when I preche
I paine me to haue an hautein speche
And ring it out, as round as doth a bell
For I can all by roote, that I tell
My teme is alwaie, and euer was
(Radix omnium malorum est cupiditas)
First I pronounce fro whence I come
And then my billes I shewe al and some
Our liege lordes seale on my patent
That shewe I first, my body to warrent
That no man be so bolde, preest ne clerke
Me to disturbe, of Christes holy werke
And after that, I tel forth my tales
Bulles of Popes, and of Cardinales
Of Patriarkes, and of Bishopes I shewe
And in latin I speke wordes a fewe
To sauer with my predicacion
And for to stere men to deuocion
Than shewe I forth my long christal stones
Ycrammed ful of cloutes and of bones
Relikes they ben, as wene they echone
Than haue I in laton a shoder bone
Whiche that was of an holy iewes sheepe.
Good men say I, take of my wordes keepe
If that this bone be washen in any wel
If cowe or calfe, sheepe, or oxe swel
That any worme hath eten, or hem stonge
Take water of this wel, and washe his tonge
And it is hole anon: and farthermore
Of pockes, and of scabbes, and euery sore
Shall sheepe be hole, that of this well
Drinketh a draught, take keepe of that I tell.
If the good man that beestes oweth
Wol euery day, er the cocke croweth
Fasting drinke of this wel a draught
As thilke holy iewe our elders taught
His beestes and his store shall multiply
And sirs, also it healeth ielosye
For though a man be fall in ielous rage
Let make with this water his potage
And neuer shall he more his wife mistriste
Though he in soth the defaute by her wist
Al had she take preestes two or three
Here is a mittaine eke, that ye may se
He that his hande wol put in this mittaine
He shal haue multiplying of his graine
When he hath sowen, be it whete or otes
So that he offer good pens or grotes.
And men and wome, o thing I warne you
If any wight ben in this churche now
That hath done sinne horrible, that he
Dare not for shame of it shriuen be
Or any woman, be she yonge or olde
That hath made her husbond cokewolde
Such folk shul haue no power ne no grace
To offer to my relikes in this place
And who so findeth him out of such blame
Commeth vp and offre in goddes name
And I assoyle him by the auctorite
Suche as by bulle was graunted to me.
By this gaude haue I wonne euery yere
An hundred marke, sithen I was pardonere
I stonde like a clerke in my pulpet
And the leude people ben doune iset
I preche so as ye haue ered here before
And tel an hundred iapes more
Than paine I me to stretche forth my neche
And este and west, vpon the people I beche
As doth a doue, sitting vpon a berne
My hondes and my tonge gon full yerne
That it is ioy to se my besinesse
Of auarice, and of suche cursednesse
Al my preching is for to maken hem free
To yeuen her pens, and namely vnto me
For mine entent is not but for to winne
And nothing for correction of sinne

The Pardoners prologue.

I recche neuer whan that they ben beried
Though her soule gon a blackburied
For certes many a predication
Cometh oft time of iuel entencion.
Some for plesaunce of folke, & for flatery
To ben auaunced by hipocrisy
And some for veine glory, and some for hate
For whan I dare not other waies debate
Than wol I sting hem with my tõge smerte
In preching, so that he shall not asterte
To ben diffamed falsely, if that he
Hath trespased to my bretherne or to me
For though I tell not his propre name
Men shall wel knowe that it is the same
By signes, or by other circumstaunces
This quite I folke, ỹ doth vs displesaunces
Thus put I out my venim vnder hewe
Of holinesse, to semen holy and trewe
But shortly mine entent I wol deuise
I preche of nothing but of couetise
Therfore my teme is yet, and euer was
Radix omnium malorum est cupiditas
Thus can I preache ayenst the same vice
Whiche that I vse, and that is auarice
But though my selfe be gilty in that sinne
Yet can I maken other folke to twinne
From auarice, and sore hem to repent
But that is not my principall entent
I preche nothing but for couetise
Of this matere, it ought inough suffise.
Than tell I hem ensamples many one
Of olde stories, longe time agone
For leude people louen tales olde
Whiche thinges they can well report & holde
What trowe ye: whiles that I may preche
And winne gold and siluer for to teche
That I wol liue in pouert wilfully:
Nay nay, I thought it neuer truely
For I wol preche and begge in sondrie lõdes
I wol not do no labour with mine hondes
Ne make baskettes and liue therby
Bicause I wol not begge idelly
I wol none of the apostels countrefete
I wol haue money, mault, chese, and whete
Al were it yeuen of the poorest page
Or of the porest widdow in a village
Though her childrẽ should sterue for famine
Nay, I wol drinke the licoure of the wine
And haue a poly wenche in euery toun
But herkeneth lordinges my conclusioun
Your liking is that I should tel a tale
Now I haue dronken a draught of corny ale
By God I hope I shal tel you a thing
That shal by reason ben at your liking
For though my selfe be a full vicious man
A moral tale yet I you tell can
Which I am wont to preche, for to winne
Now holde your peace, my tale I wol begin.

Here endeth the Pardoners prologue, and here foloweth his tale.

In flaũders whilom there was a company
Of yonge folke, that haũted foly
As hasard, riot, stewes, and tauernes
Where as with harpes, lutes, and geternes
They dauncen and plaien at dice night & day
And eten also, ouer that her might may
Through which they don the deuil sacrifice
Within the deuils temple, in cursed wise
By superfluite abhominable
Her othes ben so great and so damnable
That it is grisly for to here hem swere
Our blessed lordes body they al to tere
Hem thought Iewes rent him not inough
And eche of hem at others sinne lough.
And right anon comen in tombesteres
Fetis and smale and yonge foiteres
Singers with harpes, baudes, and wafereres
Whiche that ben verely the deuils officers
To kindle and blowe the fire of lechery
That is anered vnto glotony
The holy writte take I to me witnesse
That lechery is in wine and dronkenesse.
Lo how that dronken Lothe vnkindely
Lay by his daughters two vnwetingly
So dronke he was, he nist what he wrought
And therfore sore repent him ought
Herodes, who so wol the stories seche
There may ye lerne, and by ensample teche
When he of wine was repiete at his feste
Right at his owne table, yaue his heste
To sleen Iohan the Baptiste ful giltlesse
Seneke saith eke good wordes doutlesse
He saith he can no difference finde
Betwirt a man that is out of his minde
And a man that is dronkelewe
But woodnesse that is fallen in a shrewe
Persseuereth lenger than doth dronkenesse
O glotony, ful of cursidnesse
O cause first of our confusion
O originall of our damnacion
Til Christ had bought vs wt his blode again
Lo how dere, shortely for to sain
Bought was first this cursid vilanie

Corrupt

Corrupt was al this world through glotnie
Adam our fornfather, and his wife also
Fro Paradise, to labour and to wo
Were driuen for that vice, it is no drede
For whiles that Adam fasted, as I rede
He was in Paradise, and whan that he
Eate of the fruict, defended on the tre
Anon he was out cast to wo and pain
O glotenie, on thee well ought vs to plain
Oh, wist a man how many maladies
Foloweth of excesse and of glotenies
He would been the more measurable
Of his diete, sitting at his table
Alas the short throte, the tender mouthe
Maketh that East and West, North & South
In yearth, in aire, in water, men to swinke
To getten a gloton deinte meate and drinke
Of this matter, o Paule wel canst thou treat
Meate vnto wombe, & wombe eke vnto meat
Shall God destroie bothe as Paule saieth
Alas, a foule thing it is by my faieth
To saie this worde, and fouler is the dede
Whan men so drinketh of the white and rede
That of his throte he maketh his priue
Through thilke cursed superfluite.
The Apostle saieth, weping full pitously
There walken many, of whiche told haue I
I saie it now weping with pitous voice.
There been enemies of Christes croice
Of which the ende is death, wõbe is her God
O belie, O wombe, O stinking cod
Fulfilled of dong and of corruption
At either ende of the foule is the soun
How greate cost and labour is to finde
These cokes: how thei stamp, strein, & grinde
And tourne substaunce in to accident
To fulfill all thy likerous talent
Out of the hard bones knocken thei
The mary, for thei cast it not awaie
That maie go through the gullet safe & softe
Of spicerie, of leaues, barke, and rote
Shall been his sauce imade by delite
To make hem haue a newer apetite
But certes he that haunteth soche delites
Is dedde, whiles that he liueth in the vices
A lecherous thing is wine and dronkenes
It is full of striuing and of wretchednes
Oh dronken man, disfigured in thy face
Sower is thy breath, foule art þ to embrace
And through thy drõken nose soweth þ soun
As tho thou saidest aie, Sampson Sampson
And yet God wot Sãpson dronk neuer wine
Thou fallest, as it wer a stiched swine
Thy tong is lost, and all thine honest cure
For dronkennesse is very sepulture
Of mannes witte, and his discrecion
In whom that drinke hath domination
He can no counsaile kepe, it is no drede
Now kepe you fro the white and fro the rede
Namely fro the White wine of Lepe
That is to sell in Fishe streate and in Chepe
This Wine of Spain crepeth subtelly
And other wines growing fast by
Of whiche riseth soche fumosite
That whã a man hath dronk draughtes thre
And weneth that he be at home in Chepe
He is in Spain, right at the toune of Lepe
Nought at Rochell, ne at Burdeaux toun
And than woll he saie, Sampsoun Sãpsoun
But herkeneth lordinges o word, I you pray
That all the souerain actes, dare I saie
Of victories in the old Testament
That through very God, that is omnipotent
Were doen in abstinence and in praier
Loketh the Bible, and there ye mow it lere
Loketh Attila, the greate conquerour
Died in his siepe, with shame and dishonour
Bleding aie at his nose in dronkennesse
A capitain should liue in soberuesse
And ouer all this, auise you right wel
What was commaunded vnto Lamuel:
Not Samuel: but Lamuel saie I
Redeth the Bible, and findeth it expressly
Of wine yeuing to hem that haue iustice
No more of this, for it maie inough suffice

And now that I haue spoke of glotonie
Now woll I defende you hasardrie
Hasarde is very mother of lesinges
And of deceipt, and cursed forswearinges
Blaspheme of Christ, mãslauzter, & wast also
Of battaile of time, and of other mo
It is repreue, and contrary to honour
For to be holden a common hasardour
And euer the hier that he is of estate
The more he is holden desolate
If that a Prince vse hasardrie
In all gouernaunce and policie
He is as by comen opinion
Hold the lesse in reputacion
Stilleb̃ that was hold a wise ambassadour
was sent into Corinth wt full great honour
Fro Calidone, to maken hem aliaunce
And whan he came, happed this chaunce
That all the greatest that wer of the londe
Playyng at hasarde he hem fonde
For whiche, as sone as it might be
He stale him home ayen to his countre
And saied, there woll I not lese my name
I will not take on me so greate defame

For to alie you to none hasardours
Sendeth other wiser embassadours
For by my trouth, me were leuer die
Than I should you to hasardours alie
For ye that been so glorious in honours
Shall not alie you with hasardours
As by my will, ne by my treatie
This wise Philosopher, thus saied he.

Loke ehe how to king Demetrius
The king of Parthes, as the boke saieth vs
Sent him a paire of Dice of gold in scorne
For he had vsed hasardrie there biforne
For whiche he held his glory and his renoun
At no value or reputacioun
Lordes might finde other maner plaie
Honest inough to driue the daie awaie.

Now woll I speke of othes false and great
A worde or two, as other bokes entreat
Great swearing is thing abhominable
And false swearing is yet more reprouable
The hie God forbad swearing at all
Witnesse of Mathew, but in speciall
Of swearing, saieth the holy Jeromie
Thou shalt sweare soth thine othes, & not lie
And sweare in dome and eke in rightwisnes
But idle swearing is a cursednes
Behold and se that in the first table
Of hie Gods hestes honourable
How that the seconde heste of him is this
Take not my name in idelnesse amis
Lo, he rather forbiddeth soche swearing
Than homicide, or any other cursed thing
I saie as thus, by order it stondeth
This knoweth thei ẏ his hestes vnderstōdeth
How that the seconde heste of God is that
And further more, I woll thee tell all plat
That vengeaunce shall not part fro his hous
That of his othes is to outragious
By Goddes precious hart, and his nailes
And by the blood of Christ, that is in Hailes
Seuen is my chaunce, and thin fiue and thre
By Goddes armes, if thou falsly plaie me
This dagger shall through thine harte go
This fruict cometh of thilke bones two
Forswearing, ire, falsnesse, and homicide
Now for the loue of Christ, that for vs dide
Leaueth your othes, bothe great and smale
For I shall tell you a meruailous tale.

These riottours three, of whiche I tell
Long erst or prime rong any bell
Were set hem in a Tauerne to drinke
And as thei sat, thei heard a Bell clinke
Biforne a cors, that was caried to his graue
That one of hem gan call to his knaue
Go bette (q he) and aske redily
What cors is this, that passeth forth by
And loke that thou report his name wele.
Sir (q he) it nedeth neuer a dele
It was me tolde er ye came here two houres
He was parde an old felowe of yours
And sodainly was he slain to night
For dronke as he sat on his benche vpright
There came a priuie theefe, men clepen death
That in this countrey all the people slaeth
And with his speare he smote his hart a two
And went his waie, withouten wordes mo
He hath a thousande slain, this pestilence
And maister, er ye come in his presence
Me thinketh that it were necessarie
For to beware of soche an aduersarie
Bethe redy for to meten him euermore
Thus taught me my dame, I saie no more.
By sainct Mary, saied this Tauernere
The child saieth sothe, for he hath this yere
Yens ouer a mile, slain in a great village
Bothe man and woman, child and page
I trowe his habitacion be there
To been auised, great wisedom it were
Er that he did a man dishonour.
Ye Gods armes (q this riottour)
Is it soche peril with him for to mete?
I shall him seche by stile and eke by strete
I make a vowe, by Goddes digne bones
Herkeneth felowes, we three been all ones
Let eche of vs hold vp his honde to other
And eche of vs become others brother
And we woll slea this false traitour death
He shall be slain, that so many slaeth
By Gods dignite, er that it be night.
Togider han these three her trouthes plight
To liue and die eche of them with other
As though he were his owne brother
And vp thei sterten all dronken in this rage
And forth thei gone, toward that village
Of whiche the Tauerner hath spoken biforе
And many a grisly othe han thei swore
And Christes blessed body thei to rent
Death shall be dedde, and we maie him hent
Whan thei han gone not fully a mile
Right as thei would haue troden ouer a stile
An old poore man with hem met
This old man full mekely hem gret
And saied, now lordinges God ye see.
The proudest of these riottours three
Answerd ayen, what chorle with hard grace
Why art thou all forwrapped saue thy face?
Why liuest thou so long in so great age?
This old man gan loken in his visage
And saied thus: for I can not finde

A man, though I walked into Inde
Neither in citee, ne in no village
That would chaunge his youth for mine age
And therfore mote I haue mine age still
As long time as it is Goddes will.
Ne death alas, nill not haue my life
Thus walke I like a restlesse caitife
And on ỹ ground, which is my mothers gate
I knocke with my staffe erliche and late
And saie, leue mother let me in
Lo how I vanishe, flesshe, blood, and skin
Alas, whan shall my bones been at reste
Mother with you would I chaunge my cheste
That in my chamber long time hath be
Ye for an heren clout to wrappe in me
But yet to me she woll not doen that grace
For whiche full welked is my face
But sirs, to you it is no curtesie
To speaken vnto an old man vilanie
But he trespace in worde either in dede
In holy writ, ye maie your self well rede
Ayenst an old man, hore vpon his hedde
Ye should arise, therfore I you rede
Ne doeth vnto an old man no harme as now
No more than ye would a man did you
In age, if that ye maie so long abide
And God be with you, whether ye go or ride
I mote go theder as I haue to go
Naie old chorle, by God thou shalt not so
Saied these other hasardours anon
Thou partest not so lightly by sainct Jhon
Thou spakest rizt now of thilke traitor death
That in this countrey all our frendes slaeth
Haue here my trouth thou art his espie
Tell where he is, or els thou shalt die
By God and by the holy Sacrament
For sothely thou art of his assent
To slea vs yong folke, thou false theefe.
Now sirs, if it be to you so lefe
To finde death, tourne vp this croked waie
For in that groue I left him by my faie
Under a tree, and there he woll abide
Ne for your boste he nill him nothing hide
Se ye yõder oke, right there ye shal him finde
God saue you, that bought ayen mankinde
And you amende, thus saied this old man.
Than eueriche of these riottours ran
Til thei cam to the tree, and there thei found
Floreines of gold fine, icoigned round
Well nie a seuen bushels, as hem thought
No lenger than after death thei sought
But eche of hem so glad was of that sight
For that the Floreins so faire been & bright
That douue thei sit, by the precious horde
The worst of hem spake the first worde

Brethern (q̃ he) take kepe what I saie
My wit is great, though I borde or plaie
This treasure hath fortune to vs yeuen
In mirthe and solite our life to liuen
And lightly as it commeth, so woll we spend
Heie, Goddes precious harte: who wend
To daie, that we should haue so faire a grace?
But might this gold be caried fro this place
Home to my house, or els to ours
(For well I wote that all this gold is ours)
Than were we in hie felicite
But truely by daie it maie not be
Men would saie, that we were theues strong
And for our owne treasure doen vs hong
This treasure must icaried be by night
As wisely and as slily as it might
Wherfore I rede, let loke emong vs all
To draw we, and let se where the cutte wol fall
He that hath the shortest cut with hart blith
Shall renne to the toune, and that ful swith
To bring vs bread and drinke full priuely
And two of vs shall kepe full subtelly
This treasure well, and if he woll not tarie
Whan it is night, we woll this treasure carie
By one assent, where as vs liste best
That one of hem brought grasse in his fest
And bad hem draw, & loke on whõ it wold fal
And it fell on the yongest of hem all
And forth toward the toune he went anon
And also sone as he was gon
That one of hem spake vnto that other
Thou wost well, thou art my swore brother
Thy profite woll I tell thee right anone
Thou wost well that our felowe is gone
And here is gold, and that full greate plentee
That shall departed be emong vs three
But natheless, if that I can shape it so
That it departed were emong vs two
Had I not doen a frendly tourne to thee
That other answerd, I not how ỹ might be
I woll well that the gold were ours two
What should we doe, that it might be so?
Shall it be counsaile (saied the first shrew)
And I shall tell thee in wordes fewe
What we woll doen, and bring it well about
I graunt (q̃ that other) out of doubt
That by my trouth, I woll thee not bewrain
Now (q̃ he) thou wost well we been twain
And twain of vs shall stronger be than one
Loke whan he is set, and than anone
Arise, as though thou wouldest w̃ him plaie
And I shall riuẽ him through the sides tway
Whiles ỹ thou struggleste w̃ him as in game
And with thy dagger, loke thou doe the same
And than shall all the good departed be

My

The Pardoners tale.

My dere frende, betwixt thee and me
Than maie we bothe our lustes fulfill
And plaie at Dice, right at our owne will
And thus accorded been these shrewes twaie
To slea the third, as ye heard me saie.

This yongest, which that went to ỹ toune
Full often in his hart he rolled vp and doune
The beaute of these floreins faire and bright
O Lorde (q he) if so were that I might
Haue all this treasour to my self alone
There nis no man, that liueth vnder trone
Of God, that should liue so mery as I
And at the last the fende our enemy
Put in his thought that he shuld poison beie
With which he might slaen his felowes twey
For why, the fende fonde him in soche liuing
That he had leue to sorowe him to bring
For this was vtterly his entent
To slaen hem bothe, and neuer to repent

And forth he goth, no lēger would he tary
Into the toune, vnto a Potecary
And praied him that he would him sell
Some poison, that he might his rattes quell
And eke there was a Polkat in his hawe
That as he saied, his Capons had islawe
And said, he would wreken him if ỹ he might
Of vermin, that distroied hem by night.

The Poticarie answerd, thou shalt haue
A thing, as wisly God my soule saue
In all this worlde there nis no creature
That eateth or drinketh of this confecture
Not but ỹ mountenaunce of a corne of whete
That he ne shall his life anon forlete
Ye sterue he shall, and that in lesse while
Thā thou woldest gon a pace, not but a mile
This poison is so hearde and so violent.

This cursed man hath in his honde hent
This poison in a box, and sithe he ran
Into the next streate vnto a man
And borowed him large botels thre
And in the two, the poison poured he
The third he kept cleane for his drinke
For all the night he shope him for to swinke
In caryng of the gold out of that place
And whan this riottour, with sorie grace
Hath filde with him his great bottels thre
To his felowes ayen repaired he.

What nedeth it thereof to sermon more?
For right as thei had cast his death before
Right so thei han him slain, and that anone
And whā this was doen, than spake that one
Now let vs sit and drinke, and make vs mery
And afterward thei wolne his body bury
And after that it happed hem par caas
The one toke the botel, therin ỹ poison was
And dronke, and yaue his felowe drinke also
Throughout whiche anon thei storuen both two

But certes I suppose that Auicenne
Wrote neuer in no canon, ne in no fenne
More wonder sorowes of empoisonning
Than had these wretches two in her ending
Thus ended been these homicides two
And eke the false enpoisonner also

O cursed sinne, full of all cursidnesse
O traitour homicide, O wickednesse
O glotenie, luxure, and hasardie
Thou blasphemour of Christ with vilanie
And othes greate, of vsage and of pride
Alas mankinde, how maie it betide
That to thy creatour, which ỹ thee wrought
And with his precious blood thee bought
Thou art so false and so vnkinde, alas

Now good men, God forgeue you your trespas
And ware you fro the sinne of auarice
Mine holy pardon, maie you all warisshe
So that ye offer nobles or starlinges
Other els siluer spones, broches or ringes
Boweth your hedde vnder this Bulle
Cometh vp ye wiues, and offreth of your wol
Your names here I enter in my rolle anon
Into the blisse of heauen shull ye all gon
I you assoile by mine high powere
Ye that offren, as cleane and eke clere
As ye were borne. Lo sirs, thus I preache
And Jesu Christ, that is our soules leache
So graunt you his pardon to receiue
For that is best, I woll you not disceiue
But sirs, one worde forgate I in my tale
I haue relikes, and pardon in my male
As faire as any man in Englonde
Whiche were geuen me by the Popes honde
If any of you woll of deuocion
Offren, and haue mine absolucion
Cometh forth anon, and kneleth her adoun
That ye maie haue part of my Pardoun
Or els taketh pardon as ye wende
All newe and freshe, at euery tounes ende
So that ye offren alwaie newe and newe
Nobles or pens, whiche been good and true
It is greate honour to eueriche that is here
That ye maie haue a sufficient pardonere
To assoile you, in countre there ye ride
For auentures, which that maie betide
For perauenture there maie fall one or two
Doune of her hors, and breke her necke a two
Loke whiche suertie it is to you all
That I am in your felowship ifall
That maie assoile you bothe more and lasse
Whan that the soule shall fro thy body passe
I rede that our hoste shall beginne

For

foꝛ he is molle enuelopt of ſinne
Cometh foꝛth ſir holle, and offer firſt anon
And thou ſhalt kiſſe the relikes euerichon
ye foꝛ a grote, vnbokell anon thy purſe.
Naie naie (q he) thā haue I cꝛiſtes curſe
Let be (q he) it ſhall not be ſo theiche
Thou wouldeſt make me kiſſe thin old breche
And ſwere it were a relike of a ſainct
Though it wer with thy foundemēt depaint
But by the ſcrolle, whiche ſainct Pelain fond
I would I had thine coilons in mine hond
In ſtede of relikes, oꝛ of ſanctuarie
Let cut hem of, I woll help thee hem to carie
Thei ſhull be ſhꝛined in an hogges tꝛode
This Pardoner anſwered not a woꝛde
So wꝛoth he was, he would no woꝛde ſaie.
Now (q our holle) I woll no lenger plaie
With thee, ne with non other angrie man.
But right anon the woꝛthy knight began
Whan that he ſa we that al the people lough
No moꝛe of this, foꝛ it is right inough
Sir Pardoner, be mery and glad of chere
And ye ſir holle, that been to me ſo dere
I pꝛaie you that ye kiſſe the Pardoner
And Pardoner, I pꝛaie thee dꝛa we thee nere
And as we did, let vs laugh and plaie
Anon thei kiſſed, and riden foꝛth her waie.

Here endeth the Pardoners tale, and here beginneth the Shipmannes Pꝛologue.

NOw frendes ſaied our holt ſo dere
How liketh you by Ihon the Pardonere:
He hath vnbokeled well the male
He hath vs tolde right a thꝛiftie tale
As touching of his miſgouernaunce
I pꝛaie to God yeue him good chaunce
As ye han heard, of theſe riottours thꝛee
Now gentill Mariner, hartely I pꝛaie thee
Tell vs a good tale, and that right anon
It ſhall be doen, by God and by ſainct Ihō
Saied this Mariner, as well as euer I can
And right anon his tale he thus began.

Here endeth the Shipmannes Pꝛologue.

Here foloweth the Shipmannes Tale.

A Marchaunt whilōdwelled at ſainct Denile
That rich was, foꝛ which men held him wiſe
A wife he had, of excellent beaute
And compinable, and reuelous was ſhe
Whiche is a thing that cauſeth moꝛe diſpēce
Than woꝛth is all the chere and reuerence
That men hem doen, at feaſtes and at daūces
Soche ſalutacions and countinaunces
Paſſeth, as doeth the ſhadowe on a wall
But wo is him that paie mote foꝛ all
The ſely huſbonde algate he mote paie
He mote vs bothe clothe and eke arraie
All foꝛ his owne woꝛſhippe, richely
In whiche arraie we dauncen iolily
And if that he maie not, parauenture
Oꝛ elſ luſt no ſoche ſpence endure
But thinketh, that it is waſt and ſloſſe
Than mote an other paie foꝛ our coſte
And lende vs gold, and that is perilous
This noble Marchaunt held a noble hous
Foꝛ whiche he had all daie great repaire
Foꝛ his largeſſe, and foꝛ his wife was faire
That wonder is: but herkeneth to my tale.
Emong all his geſtes great and ſmale
There was a Monke, a faire man and a bold
I trowe thurtie winter he was old
That euer in one, was dꝛawing to that place
This yong Monke, that ſo faire was of face
Iquainted was with this good man
Sithens that he firſt knowlege began
That in his hous, as familier was he
As it is poſſible any frende to be
And foꝛ as moche, as this good man
And eke this Monke, of whiche I began
Were bothe two borne in one village
The Monke him claimed, as foꝛ coſinage
And he again ſaied not ones naie
But was as glad thereof, as foule of daie
Foꝛ to his harte it was a great pleaſaunce
Thus been thei knit with eterne aliaunce
And eke of hem gan other foꝛ to enſure
Of bꝛotherhed, whiles her life maie dure
Free was Dan Ihon, & namely of diſpens
As in that hous, and full of diligence
To doe pleaſaunce, and eke great coſtage
He foꝛyate not to yeue the leſte page
In all that hous, but after her degre
He yaue the loꝛde, and ſithen his meine
Whā that he came, ſome maner honeſt thing
Foꝛ whiche thei wer as glad of his comming
As foule is faine, whan the ſunne vp riſeth

No

The Shipmannes tale.

No more hereof as now, for it sufficeth.
But so befell, this Marchaunt on a daie
Shope him to make redy his araie
Toward the toune of Bruges for to fare
To buie there a portion of ware
For whiche he hath sent to Paris anon
A messenger, and praied hath Dan Jhon
That he should come to S. Denis to plain
With him, and with his wife, a day or twain
Or he to Bruges went, in all wise
This noble Monke, of which I you deuise
Hath of his Abbot, as him list licence
Bicause he was a man of hie prudence
And eke an officer, out for to ride
To seen her graunges, and her bernes wide
And vnto sainct Denis he cometh anon
Who was so welcome, as my lord Dã Jhõ
Our dere cosin, full of curtesie
With him he brought a iubbe of Maluesie
And eke an other full of fine vernage
And volatily, as was aie his vsage
And thus I let hem both eate, drinke, & plaie
This marchant & this monke, a daie or tway
The third daie this Marchaunt vp riseth
And on his nede sadly him auiseth
And vp into his counting hous goth he
To reken with himself, as well maie be
Of thilke yere, how it with him stood
And how he spended had his good
And if that he encreased were or none
His bokes and his bagges many one
He laieth afore him, on his counter borde.
Full riche was his treasour and his horde
For whiche ful fast his counter doore he shet
And eke he nolde no man should him let
Of his accomptes, for the meane time
And thus he sate till it was passed prime.
Dan Jhon was risen in the morowe also
And in the garden walked to and fro
And hath his thinges saied full curtesly
This good wife come walking priuely
Into the garden, there he walked soft
And him salueth, as she hath doen full oft
A maiden child came in her companie
Whiche as her lust, she maie gouerne and gie
For yet vnder the yerde was the maied.
O dere cosin Dan Jhon, she saied
What aileth you so rathe to arise?
Nice (q he) it ought inough suffice
Fiue houres for to slepen on a night
But it were for an old pailed wight
As been these old wedded men, that lie & dare
As in a forme sitteth a weary Hare
All forstraught, with houndes great & smale
But dere nece, why loke ye so pale?
I trowe certes, that our good man
Hath you laboured, sith this night began
That you were nede to resten hastely
And with that worde he lough full merely
And with his own thought he wore all reed.
This faire wife, gan to shake her heed
And saied thus, ye God wote all (q she)
Naie cosin mine, it stondeth not so with me
For by that God that yaue me soule and life
In al the realme of Fraunce, is there no wife
That lesse lust hath to that sory plaie
For I maie singen alas, and wela waie
That I was borne, but to no wight (q she)
Dare I not tell, how it stont with me
Wherfore I thinke out of this world to wende
Or els of my self sone to make an ende
So full I am of drede and eke of care.
This Mõke began vpon this wife to stare
And saied alas, naie nece God forbede
That ye for any sorowe, or for any drede
Fordo your self, but telleth me your griefe
Perauenture I maie in your mischief
Counsaile or helpe, and therfore telleth me
All your anoie, for it shall secre be
For on my Porthose I make an othe
That neuer in my life, for lefe ne lothe
Ne shall I not of no counsaile you bewraie.
Thesame ayen to you (q she) I saie
By God and by this Porthose, I you swere
Though men would me all in peces tere
Ne shall I neuer, for to go to hell
Bewraie O worde, of thing that ye me tell
Nor for no cosinage, ne for alliaunce
But berely for loue and affiaunce
Thus been thei swore, and here vpon hisse
And ilke of hem told other what hem lisse.
Cosin (q she) if I had a space
As I haue none, and namely in this place
Than would I tell a legende of my life
That I suffred haue, sith I was a wife
With mine husbond though he be your cosin
Naie (q this Monke) by God & S. Martin
He nis no more cosin vnto me
Than is this lefe, that hongeth on the tree
I clepe him so, by sainct Denis of Fraunce
To haue the more cause of aquaintaunce
Of you, whom I haue loued specially
Abouen all other women siberly
This swere I you on my profession
Telleth your griefe, lest he come adoun
And hasteth you, and goth your waie anon
My dere loue (q she) O my Dan Jhon
Full lefe me were this counsaile to hide
But out it mote, it maie no lenger abide
My husbonde is to me the worste man

That

That euer was, sithe the worlde began
But sithen I am a wife, it sit not to me
To tellen no wight of our priuite
Neither in bed, ne in none other place
God shilde I should tell it for his grace
A wife ne should not say of her husbonde
But al honour, as I can understonde
Saue vnto you, thus much tel I shall
As helpe me god, he is noughte worthe at all
In no degre, the value of a flie
But yet me greueth most his nigardie
And wel ye wot, that women naturally
Desiren thinges sixe, as wel as I
They wolden that her husbondes should be
Hardy, and wise, riche, and therto fre
And buxom to his wife, and freshe a bed
But by that ilke lorde that for vs bled
For his honoure, my selfe to arraye
A sonday next, I mote nedes paye
An hundred frankes, or els am I lorne
Yet were my leuer that I were vnborne
Than me were done a slaunder or a villanie
And if mine husbonde eke might it aspie
I nere but lost, and therfore I you prey
Lene me this summe, or els mote I dey
Dan John I say, lene me this hundred frankes
Parde I wol not faile you my thankes
If that ye lisse to do that I you pray
For of a certaine day I wol you pay
And to don you what plesaunce and seruice
That I may don, right as ye lisse deuise
And but I do, God take on me vengeaunce
As foule as euer had Genilion of Fraunce.
This gentil monke answerd in this manere
Now truly mine owne lady dere
I haue (quod he) on you so great routhe
That I you swere, and plight my trouthe
That whan your husbond is to Flaunders ifare
I wol deliuer you out of all this care
I wol bring you an hundred frankes
And with that he caughte her by the flankes
And her enbraced hard, and kissed her ofte
Goth now your way (quod he) al stil and softe
And let vs dine as sone as euer ye may
For by my kalender it is prime of the day
Goth now, and bethy as true as I shal be.
Now els God forbid sir said she
And forth she goth, as ioly as a pie
And bad the cokes that they should hem hie
So that men might dine, and that anone
Up to her husbonde is this wife gone
And knocked at his counter dore boldely
Qui est la (quod he) Peter it am I
(Quod she) how long wol ye fast?
How long time wol ye recken and cast
Your summes, your bokes, and your thinges?
The diuel haue part of al suche reckeninges
Ye haue inough (quod she) of goddes sonde
Come doun to day, and let your bagges stonde
Ne be ye not a shamed, that Dan John
Shal fasting al this longe day gon?
What let vs go here masse and go dine.
Wife (quod this man) litell canst thou diuine
The curious besinesse that we haue
For of chapmen, so God me saue
And by that lorde that called is seint Iue
Scarsly among twenty, twelue shal thriue
Continuelly, lasting vnto their age
We may wel make chere and good visage
And driue forth the world, as it may be
And kepe our estate in priuite
Til we be deed, or els that we play
A pilgrimage, or gone out of the way
And therfore haue I great necessite
Upon this queinte world to auise me
For euermore we mote stonde in drede
Of happe and fortune, in our chapmanhede
To Flaunders wol I gone to morow at day
And come ayene as sone as euer I may
For whiche my dere wife, I the beseke
As be to euery wight buxom and meke
And for to kepe our good be curiouse
And honestly gouerne wel our house
Thou hast inough, in euery maner wise
That to a thrifty housewife may suffise
Thy lacketh none array, ne no vitaile
Of siluer in thy purse thou maiest not faile
And with ỳ worde, his counter dore he shette
And doune he goth, no lenger wold he lette
And hastely a masse was there saide
And spedely the tables were laide
And to dinner faste they hem spedde
And richely the chapman this monke fedde.
And after dinner, Dan John soberly
This chapman toke a parte al priuely
And said him thus, coulin it stondeth so
That wel I se, to Bruges ye wol go
God and seint Austen spede you and gide
I pray you coulin wisely that ye ride
Gouerneth you wel also of your diete
Al temperatly, and namely in this hete
Betwixt vs two nedeth no straunge fare
Farwel colin, God shilde you fro care
If any thing there be by day or night
And it lie in my power or in my might
That ye me wol commaunde in any wise
It shal be done, right as ye wol deuise
O thing or that ye go, if that it may be
I wolde praie you for to lene me
An hundred frankes, for a weke or twey

For certaine beestes, that I mote nedes bey
To store with a place that is ours
God helpe me so, I would it were yours
I shall not faile surely at my day
Not for a thousande frankes, a mile way
But let this thing be secrete, I you pray
For yet this night these beestes mote I bey
And fare now wele, mine owne cosin dere
Graunt mercy of your cost and your chere

This noble marchaunt, gentilly anon
Answerde and said, O cosin Dan John
Now sikerly, this is a smale requeste
My golde is yours, whan that you leste
And not onely my golde, but my chaffare
Take what you list, God shilde that ye spare
But one thing is, ye know it well ynough
Of chapmen, that her money is her plough
We may creaunce while we haue a name
But goodlesse for to be it is a shame
Pay it ayen, when it lieth at your ese
After my might, faine would I you plese.

The hundreth frankes fet he forth anon
And priuely toke hem to Dan John
No wight of this worlde, wist of this lone
Sauing this Marchaunt, & dan John alone
Thei drinke & speake, & rome a while and pley
Till that Dan John rideth to his abbey.

The morow came, & forth rid this marchāt
To flaūders ward, his prentes brought him
Til he came to Bruges, wel & merely (auaūt
Now goth this Marchaunt, wel and besily
About his nedes, and bieth, and creaunseth
He neither plaieth at dice ne dauncеth
But as a Marchaunt, shortely to tell
He ledde his life, and there I let him dwell.

The sonday next ỳ this Marchāt was gon
To seint Denis is comen Dan John
With croune and berde al fresh & newe ishaue
In al this house, there nas so litell a knaue
Ne no wight els, but he was ful faine
For ỳ my lord Dan John was comen againe
And shortely to the pointe for to gon
This faire wife accordeth with Dan John
That for these. C. frankes he should al night
Haue her in his armes bolte vpright
And this acorde parformed was in dede
In mirthe al night a besy life they lede
Til it was day, that Dan John yede his way
And bad the meine farwel & haue good day
For non of hem, ne no wight in the toun
Had of Dan John any suspectioun
And forth he rideth, home to his abbey
Or where him lifte, no more of him I sey.

This marchaunt, when ended was ỳ faire
To saint Denis he gan for to repaire
And with his wife he maketh feest and chere
And telleth her that the chaffare is so dere
That nedes must he make a cheuesaunce
For he was bonden in a recoysaunce
To paie twenty thousande shildes anon
For which this Marchant is to Paris gon
To borow of certaine frendes that he had
A certain frankes, and som with him he lad
And when he was comen in to the toun
For chierte and great affeccioun
Unto Dan John he first gothe him to pley
Nought for to borowe of him no money
But for to wete and se of his welfare
And for to tellen him of his chaffare
As frendes don, when they ben mette in fere

Dan John him maketh feest & mery chere
And he him tolde ayen full specially
How he had bought, ful wel and graciously
Thonked be God, all hole his Marchaundise
Saue that he muste in all maner wise
Maken a cheuesaunce, as for his beste
And then should he be in ioy and reste
Dan John answerd, certes I am right fain
That ye in heale be comen home again
And if I were riche, as haue I blisse
Of twenty thousand shildes shuld ye not misse
For ye so kindely, this other day
Lent me golde, and as I can and may
I thonke you, by God and by saint Jame
But natheless, I toke it vnto our dame
Your wife at home, the same golde againe
Upon your benche, she wote it wel certaine
By certaine tokens, that I can her tell
Now by your leue, I may no lenger dwell
Our abbot wol out of this toun anon
And in his company I mote gon
Grete wel our dame, mine owne nece swete
And farewell dere cosin, till we mete.

This Marchant that was ful ware & wise
Creaunced hath, and eke paide in Paris
To certaine lombardes, redy in her hondes
This sōme of golde, & gate of hem the bondes
And home he goth, as mery as a popingay
For wel he knewe he stode in suche aray
That nedes must he win by that viage
A thoulande frankes, aboue all his costage.

His wife ful redy mete him at the yate
As she was wonte, of olde vsage algate
And al that night in mirth thei be sette
For he was riche, and clerely out of dette
Whā it was day, this marchaūt gan embrace
His wife al newe, and kissed her in her face
And vp he goeth, and made it wonder tough
No more (quod she) by God ye haue inough
And wantonly ayen with him she plaide

Till

til at the laste this marchaunt thus saide.
By God (q he) I am a litel wrothe
With you my wife, although it be me lothe
And wote ye why? by God as I gesse
For ye haue made a maner of straungenesse
Betwirt me and my cosin Dan John
Ye should haue warned me, or I had gon
That he had you an hundred frankes paide
By redy token, and held him euill apaide
For that I to him spake of cheuesaunce
Me semed so, as by his countenaunce
But natheless, by God our heuen king
I thought not to aske of him nothing
I praie the wife, ne do no more so
Tell me alwayer that I fro the go
Yf any dettour, hath in mine absence
Ypaide the, lest through thy negligence
I might him aske a thing that he hath paide
This wife was not a ferde ne affraide
But boldely she saide, and that anon
Mary I defie that false monke Dan John
I hepe not of his tokens neuer a dele
He toke me certaine golde, I wote it wele
What euill the done on his monkes snoute
For God it wote, I wende without doute
That he had yeue it me, bicause of you
To don therwith mine honour and my prow
For cosinage, and eke for belle chere
That he hath had ful often times here
But sithe I se it stonte in suche disioynte
I wol answere you shortely to the pointe
Ye haue mo slacke dettours than am I
For I wol paie you well and redely
Fro day to daie, and if so be I faile
I am your wife, score it on my taile
Or els I shall paie it as sone as euer I may
For by my trueth, I haue on mine aray
And not in waste, bestowed it euery dele
And for I haue bestowed it so wele
To your honour, for goddes sake I say
As be not wrothe but let vs laugh and playe
Ye shall my ioly body haue to wedde
By God I nil not pay you but a bedde
For yeue it me, mine owne spouse dere
Turneth hitherward, and make better chere
This marchant sawe ther was no remedy
And for to chide, it was but a foly
Sithen that the thing may not amended be
Now wife he said, and I forgeue it the
But in thy life, be no more so large
Kepe bet my good, this yeue I the in charge
Thus endeth nowe my tale, & God vs sende
Taling inough, vnto our liues ende.

Here endeth the Shipmans tale.

Here foloweth the wordes of our Hoste.

Well said by corpus domini (q our Hoste)
Nowe longe mote thou saile by the coste
Thou gentil maister, gentil marinere
God giue the mōke a thousande last quad yere
A ha felowes, beware of suche a iape
The mōke put in the marchātes hode an ape
And in his wiues eke, by saint Austin
Drawe th no monkes more into your inne.
But now passe ouer, & let vs seke aboute
Who shall tel now first of all this route
Another tale, and with that worde he saide
As curtesly, as it had ben a maide.
My lady prioresse, by your leue
So that I wist that I shuld you not greue
I wold deme, that ye tellen sholde
A tale next, if so be that ye wolde.
Now wol ye vouchsafe, my lady dere
Gladly (q she) and said in this maner.

Here endeth the wordes of our hoste, and here beginneth the Prioresses prologue.

Domine dominus noster: quam admirabile est nomen tuum in vniuersa terra.

Orde our lorde, thy name how merueilous
Is in this wide worlde ispradd (q she)
For not onely thy laude precious
Parfourmed is, by men of diginite
But by the mouthe of childre thy bounte
Parfourmed is, for on the breest sucking
Somtime shewen thei thine heriyng.

Wherfore in laude, as I can best and may
Of the and of the white lilly floure
Which that thei bare, and is a maide alway
To tellen a storie, I wol do my laboure
Nought that I may encrese her honoure
For she her selfe is honour and rote
Of bountie, next her sonne, of soules bote.

O mother maiden, O maiden & mother fre
O bushe vnbrent, brenning in Moyses sight
That rauisshedest downe fro the deite
Through thin hūblesse, the gost ỹ in the light
Of whose vertue, when he in thin hert pight

Conceiued was the fathers sapience
Helpe me to tel it in thy presence.

Lady thy bounte, and thy magnificence
Thy vertue and thy great humilite
There may no tonge expresse, in no science
For somtime lady, er men praie to the
Thou goest before, of thy benignite
And gettest vs the light through thy prayere
To giden vs vnto thy sonne so dere.

My conning is to weake, O blisful quene
For to declare thy highe worthinesse
That I ne may the weight sustene
But as a childe of twelue moneth old or lesse
That can vnnethes any worde expresse
Right so fare I, and therfore I you pray
Gideth my songe, that I shal of you say.

¶ Here endeth the Prioresses prologue, and here foloweth her tale.

Here was in Asie, in a greate cite
Amonges christen folke a iewrie
Sustened by a lorde of that countre
For foule vsury, and lucre of villany
Hateful to Christ, and to his company
And through the strete mē might ride or wēde
For it was free, and open at euery ende.

A litel schole of Christen folke there stode
Doun at ỹ farther ende, in whiche ther were
Children an hepe, comen of Christen blode
That lerned in that schole, yere by yere
Such manere doctrine, as men vsen here
This is to say, to singe and to rede
As smale children done in her childehede

Amōges these childrē was a wedowes son
A litel clergion, that .vii. yere was of age
That day by day to schole was his won
And also eke, where he sey the image
Of Christes mother, had he in vsage
As him was taught, to knele a doun and say
An Aue maria, as he goth by the way.

Thus hath this wedow, her litel child itaught
Our blissed lady, Christes mother dere
To worship aye, and he forgate it naught
For the sely childe, would al day sone lere
But aye, whan I remēbre me on this matere
Saint Nicholas stōdeth euer in my presence
For he so yonge to Christ did reuerence

This litel childe his litel boke lerning
As he sate in the schole at his primere
He (Alma redemptoris mater) herd sing
As children lered her antiphonere
And as he durst, he drewe aye nere and nere
And herkened to the wordes and the note
Til he the first verse couth al by rote.

Nought wist he what this latin was to say
For he so yonge and tender was of age
But on a day his felowe gan he pray
To expoune him the song, in his langage
Or tellen him why this song was in vsage
This praide he him to construe and declare
Ful ofte time, vpon his knees bare

His felowe, which that elder was than he
Answerd him thus, this songe I haue herd say
Was made of oure blessed lady fre
Her to salewe, and eke her for to prey
To ben our helpe, and succour when we dey
I can no more expoune in this mater
I lerne songe, I can but smal grammer

And is this songe imade in reuerence
Of Christes mother, said this innocent:
Now certes I wol done my diligence
To conne it al er Christenmasse be went
Though that I for my primer shal be shent
And should be beten thrise in an houre
I wol it conne, our lady to honoure.

His felaw taught him homwarde prively
Fro day to day, til he couthe it by rote
And than he songe it wel and boldely
Fro worde to worde, acording to the note
Twise a day it passeth through his throte
To scolewarde, & homewarde when he went
On Christes mother set was all his entent

As I haue saide throughout the iewrie
This litel childe as he came to and fro
Ful merely than would he singe and crye
O Alma redemptoris mater, euer mo
The swetenesse hath his herte perced so
Of Christes mother, that to her to pray
He can not stinte of singing by the way

Our first foe, the Serpent Sathanas
That hath in Jewes hert his waspes nest
Up swale and said, O ebrake people alas

Is this a thing to you that is honeste
That suche a boy shal walke as him leste
In your dispite, and singen of suche sentence
Whiche is against your lawes reuerence

From thence forth, the iewes han conspired
This innocent out of this worlde to chase
An homicide therto han thei hired
That in an aley, had a priuy place
And as the childe gan forby to pace
This curlid Jewe him hent, and helde faste
And cutte his throte, and in a pitte him caste

I say that in a wardrope thei him threwe
Where that the Jewes purged her intraile
O curlid folke, of heraudes all newe
What may your yuel entent you auaile
Murder wol out, certes it woll not faile
And namely ther ỹ honor of God shal spredе
The bloud out crieth on your curlid dede

O mater, sowned vnto virginite
Now maiste thou sing folowinge euer in on
The white lambe celestiall (q̃ he)
Of whiche the great euangeliste seint John
In Pathmos wrote, which saith ỹ they gon
Before this lambe, and sing a songe al newe
That neuer fleshly woman thei ne knewe.

This poore widowe, awaiteth al the night
After her litell childe, and he came nought
For whiche as soone as it was day light
With face pale for drede and busy thought
She hath at scole, and els where him sought
Til finally, she gan so farre aspie
That he was laste seine in the Jewrie

With mothers pite, in her bresse enclosed
She goth as she wer halfe out of her minde
To euery place, where she hath supposed
By likelihode her childe for to finde
And euer on Christes mother, mek and kinde
She cried, and at last thus she wrought
Among the curlid Jewes she him sought

She freneth and she praieth pitously
To euery Jewe that dwelleth in thilke place
To tellen her, if her childe went there by
They say nay, but Jesu of his grace
yaue in her thought, with in a litell space
That in that place, after her sonne she criede
There he was caste, in a pitte beside.

O great God, that performist thy laude
By mouthe of innocence, lo here thy might
This Jemme of chastite, this Emeraude
And eke of martirdome the rubie bright
There he with throte icorue lay vpright
He (Alma redemptoris) gan to singe
So loude that all the place gan to ringe

The christen folke, ỹ through the strete went
In comen, for to wonder on this thing
And hastely thei for the Prouost sent
He came anone, without tarieng
And herieth Christ, that is of heuen king
And eke his mother, honoure of mankinde
And after that, the Jewes let he binde

This childe with pitous lamentacion
Was vp taken, singing his songe alway
And with honoure, and great procession
Thei carien him to the nerte abbey
His mother swowning by the bere lay
Vnneth might people that were there
This newe Rachell bring fro his bere.

With turment & with shamfull deth ilke one
This Prouost doth these Jewes for to sterue
That of this murdre wiste, and that anone
He nolde no suche curstednesse obserue
Yuel shal he haue, that iuel wol deserue
Therfore with wild horse he did hem drawe
And after warde he honge him by the lawe.

Upon his bere aye, lieth this innocent
Before the chefe aulter, whiles ỹ masse last
And after that, the abbot with his couent
Hem spedde, for to bury him als faste
And when they holy water on him caste
yet spake ỹ child, whē sprint was holy water
And songe, O alma redemptoris mater

This abbot, which that was an holy man
As monkes ben, or els ought to be
This yonge childe to couer he began
And saide: O dere childe, I hailse the
By vertue of the holy Trinite
Tell me what is thy cause for to sing
Sithens thy throte is cutte to my seming.

My throte is cutte, vnto my necke bone
Said this childe, as by way of kinde
I shoulde haue deyde, ye longe time agone
But Jesu Christ, as ye in bokes finde
Wol that his glory laste and be in minde
And for the worship of his mother dere
yet may I sing (O alma) loude and clere.

This wel of mercy, Christes mother swete

The Prioresses tale.

I loued alway, as after my conning
And when that I my life should forlete
To me she came, and badde me for to sing
This antem verely in my dying
As ye han herde, and when that I had songe
Me thought she layd a graine vpon my tonge

Wherfore I sing, and sing mote certaine
In honour of the blisful maiden fre
Til fro my tonge of taken is the graine
And after that, thus she said to me
My litle childe, nowe wol I fetche the
When that the graine is fro thy tong itake
Be not agaste, I wol the not forsake,

This holy monke, this abbot him mene I
His tõge out caught, & toke away the grayne
And he yaue vp the goste ful softly
And when this abbot had this wonder seyne
His salte teres trikled doune as reyne
And grofle he fel all flate to the grounde
And stil he lay, as he had ben ibounde.

The couent lay eke vpon the pament
Weping and heriyng Christes mother dere
And after that thei risen, and forth ben went
And toke away this martir fro the bere
And in a tombe of marble stones clere
Enclosen they his litle body swete
There he is now, God lene vs for to mete.

O yonge Hewe of Lincoln slaine also
With cursid Iewes, as it is notable
For it is but a littel while ago
Praie eke for vs, we sinful folke vnstable
That of his mercy, God be merciable
On vs, his great mercy multiply
For the reuerence of his mother Mary.

¶ Here endeth the Prioresse tale. And here foloweth the wordes of the Hoste to Chaucer.

When said was this miracle, euery man
As sobre was, as wonder was to se
Till that our hoste to japen began
And than at erste, he loked vpon me
And said thus: what man arte thou (q he)
Thou lokest, as thou wouldest finde an hare
For euer vpon the grounde I se the stare

Approche nere, and loke vp merely
Now ware you sirs, & let this mã haue place
He in the waste is shapen as wel as I
This were a popet in armes to enbrace
For any woman, smale and faire of face
He semeth elusche by his countenaunce
For vnto no wight dothe he daliaunce

Say now sõwhat, sithẽs other folke han said
Tel vs a tale of mirthe and that anon
Hoste (q he) ne be not euil apaide
For other tale certes can I none
But of a rime, I lerned yore agone
Ye that is good (q he) we shullen it here
Som deinte thing, me thinketh by thy chere.

¶ Here endeth the wordes of the Hoste and here foloweth the rime of sir Thopas.

Listeneth lordinges in good intent
And I wol tell verament
Of Mirthe and of solas
All of a knight was faire and gent
In batayle and in turnament
His name was sir Thopas.
I borne he was in ferre countre
In Flaunders, al beyonde the see
At Popering in the place.
His father was a man ful fre
And a lorde he was of that countre
As it was goddes grace.
Sir Thopas was a doughty swaine
White was his face as paine maine
His lippes reed as rose
His rudde is like scarlet in graine
And I you tell in good certaine
He had a semely nose.
His heer, his berde was like safroun
That to his girdel raught adoun
His shone of corde wane.
Of Bruges were his hosen broun
His robe was of chekelatoun
That cost many a iane
He couthe hunt at the wilde dere
And ride an hauking for by the riuere
With grey gofhake on honde
Therto he was a good archere
Of wrastling was there none his pere
There any Ram should stonde.
Full many a maide bright in boure
They mourne for him paramoure
Whan hem were bet to slepe.

But

But he was chast, and no lechoure
And swete as is the Bramble floure
That beareth the redde hipe.
And so befell vpon a daie
Forsoth, as I you tell maie
Sir Thopas would out ride.
He worth vpon his stede graie
And in his honde a launce gaie
A long swerde by his side.
He pricketh through a faire forest
Therein was many a wilde beest
ye bothe Buche and Hare.
And as he pricked North and Est
I tell you, him had almest
Betide a foule care.
There springen herbes greate and small
The Licores and the Setuall
And many a clowe Gelofer
And Nutmiges, to put in ale
Whither it be newe or stale
Or for to lie in cofer.
The birdes singen, it is no nale
The Sperhauke and the Popingaie
That iolie it was to here.
The Throstell eke made his laie
The Wodcocke vpon the spraie
She song full loude and clere.
Sir Thopas fell in loue longing
And whan he heard the Throstill sing
He pricketh as he were wood
His faire stede in his pricking
So swette, that men might him wring
His sides were all blood.
Sir Thopas eke so wearie was
For pricking on the soft grass
So fiers was his corage
That doune he laied him in that place
To maken his stede some solace
And gaue him good forage.
O, sainct Mary, benedicite
What aileth this loue at me
To binde me so sore?
Me dreamed all this night parde
An elfe quene shall my lemman be
And slepe vnder my gore.
An Elfe Quene woll I loue i wis
For in this worlde no woman is
Worthy to be my make in toune
All other women I forsake
And to an Elfe Quene I me take
By dale and eke by doune.
Into his sadell he clombe anone
And pricked ouer stile and stone
An Elfe Quene for to espie.
Till he so long hath ridden and gone
That he fonde in a priuie wone
The countre of Fairie. So wilde
For in that countre nas there none
Neither wife ne childe
Till him there came a great Giaunt
His name was called sir Oliphaunt
A perillous man of deede.
He saied childe, by Termagaunt
But if thou pricke out of my haunt
Anon I slea thy stede with mace.
Or euer I go out of this place
Here is the Quene of Fairie.
With Harpe and Pipe, and Simphonie
Dwelling in this place.
The child saied, als so mote I thee
To morowe woll I meten thee
Whan I haue mine armoure.
And yet I hope par ma foie
That thou shalt with this launce gaie
Abien it full sore.
Through thy mawe
Shall I perce, if I maie
Or it be fully prime of the daie
For here thou shalt be slawe.
Sir Thopas drowe aback full fast
This Giaunt at him stones cast
Out of a fell staffe sling.
But faire escaped sir Thopace
And all was through Gods grace
And through his faire bering.
yet liſteneth lordinges to my tale.
Merier than the Nightingale
For now I woll ye roune.
How sir Thopas, with sides smale
Pricking ouer doune and dale
Is comen ayen to toune.
His mery men commaunded he
To maken him bothe game and gle
For nedes must he fight.
With a Giaunt, with heddes three
For paramoures and iolite
Of one that shone full bright.
Doe come he saied my minstrales
And iestors, for to tellen vs tales
Anon in mine arming.
Of Romaunces that been roials
Of Popes and of Cardinals
And eke of loue longing.
They set him first the swete wine
And Meede eke in a Mazeline
And royall spicerie.
Of Ginger bread that was full fine
Of Licores and eke Comine
With Suger that is trie.
He did nert his white iere
Of cloth of lake fine and clere

The rime of sir Thopas.

I breche and eke a sherte.
And next his shert an haketon
And ouer that an haberion
For percing of his herte.
And ouer that a fine hauberke
Was all iwrought of Jewes werke
Full strong it was of plate.
And ouer that his cote armoure
As white as is the Lilly floure
In whiche he would debate.
His shilde was all of gold so redde
And therin was a Bores hedde
A carbocle by his side.
And there he swore on ale and bread
How that the Giaunt should be dead
Betide what betide.
His iambeux were of cure buly
His swerde shethe of Iuorie.
His helme of Laton bright.
His sadell was rof ruel bone
His bridle as the Sunne shone
Or as the Moone light.
His speare was of fine Sypres
That biddeth warre, and nothing peace
The hedde full sharpe igrounde.
His stede was all dapple graie
He goth an aumble by the waie
Full softly and round in londe.
Lo Lordes mine, here is a fit
If ye woll any more of it
To tellen it woll I fonde.

NOw hold your mouth for charite
Bothe knight and Ladie fre
And herkeneth to my spell.
Of battaile and of cheualrie
And of Ladies loue drerie
Anon I woll you tell.
Men speken of Romaunces of pris
Of Hornechild, and of Ipotis
Of Beuis, and of sir Gie
Of sir Libeaux, and Blaindamoure
But sir Thopas, he beareth the floure
Of riall cheualrie.
His good stede he bestrode
And forth vpon his waie glode
As sparke out of the bronde.
Upon his creste he bare a toure
And therin sticked a Lilly floure
God shilde his cors fro shonde.
And for he was a knight auentrous
He nolde slepen in none hous
But ligge in his hood.
His bright helme was his wanger
And by him tedde his destrer
Of herbes fine and good.
Himself dronke water of the well
As did the knight sir Perciuell
So worthy vnder wede.

Here endeth the rime of sir Thopas, and beginneth the wordes of our Hoste.

NO more of this for Goddes dignite
(quoth our hoste) for ỹ makest me
So wery of thy very leudenes
That also wisly God my soule blesse
Mine eares aken of thy draftie speache
Now sothe a rime, the deuill I beteache
This maie well be clepe rime Dogrell (quoth he)
Why so (quoth I) why wolt thou let me
More of my tale, than any other man
Sens that it is the best rime I can.
By God (quoth he) plainly at o worde
Thy draftie riming is not worth a torde
Thou doest nought els but spendest time
Sir at one worde, thou shalt no lenger rime
Let se whither thou canst tell ought in gest
Or tell in prose somwhat at the lest
In whiche there maie be some mirthe or doctrine
Gladly (quoth I) by Goddes swete pine
I woll you tell a little thing in prose
That ought like you, as I suppose
Or els ye be certes to daungerous
It is a morall tale vertuous
All be it tolde sometime in sondrie wise
Of sondrie folke, as I shall you deuise
As thus, ye wote that euery Euangelist
That telleth vs the paine of Jesu Christ
Ne saieth not all thing as his felowe doeth
But natheless her sentence is all soth
And all acordeth in her sentence
All be there in her telling difference
For some of hem sain more, and some lesse
Whan thei his pitous passion expresse
I mean of Marke, Mathew, Luke, and Iho
But doubtlesse her sentence is all one
Therfore lordinges, I you beseche
If that you thinke I varie in my speche
As thus, though I tell somwhat more
Of prouerbes, than ye han heard bifore
Comprehended in this little treatise here
To enforcen with the effect of my matere
And though I not the same wordes saie
As ye han heard, yet to all you I praie
Blameth me not, for in my sentence
Shull ye not finde mochell difference
Fro the sentence of this treates lite

After

After the whiche, this merie tale I write
And therefore herkeneth, what I shall saie
And let me tell my tale I you praie.

Here endeth the wordes of our hoste, and here beginneth Chaucers Tale of Melibeus.

A yong manne called Melibeus, mightie and riche, begate vpon his wife that called was Prudence, a doughter which that called was Sophie.

Upon a daie bifell that he for his disport is went into the feldes him to plaie: His wife and eke his doughter hath he lefte within his hous, of whiche the dores were faste ishet. Foure of his old foes han it aspied, and setten ladders to the walles of his hous, and by the windowes been entred, and bet his wife, and wounded his doughter, with fiue mortall woũdes, in fiue sondrie places: That is to saie, in her feete, in her hondes, in her eares, in her nose, and in her mouthe, and lefte her for ded, and wenten her waie.

Whan Melibeus retourned was into his hous, and see all this mischief, he like a mad man renting his clothes, gan to wepe & crie.

Prudence his wife, as ferforth as she durst besought him of his weping for to stint: But not for thy, he gan to wepe and crie euer lenger the more.

This noble wife Prudence remembred her vpon the sentence of Ouide, in his boke that cleped is the remedy of loue, wher as he saith he is a foole that disconforteth the mother to wepe, in the death of her childe, till she haue wepte her till, as for a certain time: and than shall a man doen his diligence with amiable wordes, to reconfort and praie her of her weping for to stinte. For whiche reason this noble wife Prudence, suffered her husbande to wepe and crie, as for a certain space: and whã she sawe her time, she saied him in this wise. Alas my Lorde (q she) why make ye your self for to be like a foole? For soth it apperteineth not vnto a wise manne, to maken sorowe. Your doughter with the grace of God, shall warisshe and escape. And all were it so that she right now were ded, ye ne ought not as for her death your self distroy. Seneke saith the wise manne shall not take to greate disconfort for the death of his children, but certes he should suffre it in pacience, as well as he abideth the death of his owne proper person.

This Melibeus answerde anon and said: What man (q he) should of his weping stint, that hath so great a cause for to wepe: Jesus himself our Lord, wepte for the death of Lazarus his frende. Prudence answered, certes well I wot, a temperate weping is nothing defended, to him that sorowfull is, emonge folke in sorow, but it is rather graunted him to wepe. The Apostle Poule vnto the Romanes writeth, menne should reioice with him that maketh ioie, and wepe with soche folke as wepen. But though a temperate weping be graunted, certes outragious weping is defended. Measure of weping should be considered, after the lore that teacheth vs Seneke. Whan that thy frende is dedde (q he) let not thin yen to moiste been of teeres, ne to moch drie: although teeres comen to thine yen, let hem not fal. And whan thou hast forgon thy frende, doe diligence to get an other frende: and this is more wisedome than for to wepe for thy frende, whiche thou hast lorne, for therein is no bote. And therfore if ye gouerne you by sapiẽce, put away sorowe out of your harte. Remembreth you that Jesus Sirake saieth, a man that is ioious and glad in hart it him conserueth florishing in his age: But sothely a sorowfull harte maketh his bones drie. He saieth eke thus, that sorowe in harte slaeth full many a manne. Salomon saieth, that right as moughthes in the shepes fleise anoieth the clothes, and the smale wormes the tree, right so anoieth sorowe the harte of man, wherfore vs ought as well in the death of our children, as in the losse of our temporall goodes, haue pacience.

Remember you vpon patient Jobe, whan he had loste his children and his temporalle substaunce, and in his body endured and receiued full many a greuous tribulacion, yet saied he thus: Our Lorde it sente to me, our Lorde hath biraft it me, right so as our lorde would, right so it be don, iblessed be the name of our Lorde. To these forsaied thinges Melibeus vnto his wife Prudence answerd: All thy wordes (q he) been true, and therto profitable, but truly mine harte is troubled with this sorowe so greuously, that I not what to do. Let call (q Prudence) your true frendes al and thy linage, whiche that been wise, & telleth to hem your case, & herkeneth what they saie in counsailing, and gouern you after her sentẽce. Salomõ saith, werke al thy things by counsaile,

counsaile, and thou shalt neuer rue. Than by counsaile of his wife Prudence, this Melibeus, let cause a greate congregacion of people, as Surgiens, Phisicions, olde folke and young, and some of his olde enemies reconciled (as by her semblante) to his loue and to his grace: and therwithal there came sum of his neighbours, that did him reuerence more for dreade than for loue, as it happe ofte. There comen also full many subtill flatterers, and wise Aduocates lerned in the lawe. And whan these folkes togeders assembled were, this Melibeus in sorowfull wise, shewed hem his case, and by the maner of his speache, it semed that in harte, he bare a cruell ire, redy to doen vengeaunce vpon his foos and sodainly he desired that warre should begin, but natheless yet asked he counsaile vpon this matter. A Surgien by licence and assente of soche as were wise vp rose, and vnto Melibeus saied, as ye shall heare.

Sir (quod he) as to vs Surgiens appartaineth, that we do to euery wight the best that we can, where as wee been withholden, and to our paciente that wee dooen no damage: wherfore it happeth many time and oft, that whan twoo men haue eueriche wounded other, one Surgien healeth hem bothe, wherfore vnto our art it is not pertinent to norish warre, ne parties to supporte. But certes, as to the warishing of your doughter, al be it so that perilously she bee wounded, we shall doe so tentife bulinesse fro daie to night, that with the grace of GOD, she shall been whole and sounde, as sone as is possible. Almoste right in thesame wise the Phisiciens aunswerde, saue that thei saiden a fewe woordes more: That right as maladies been by her contraries cured, right so shall man warishe warre by peace. His neighbours full of enuie, his fained frendes that semed reconciled, and his flatterers, maden semblaūce of weping, and enpaired and agrutched moche of this matter, in praising greatly Melibe, of might, of power, of richesse, and of frēdes, dispising the power of his aduersaries: and saied vtterly, that he anon should wreken him on his foos, and begin warre.

Up rose than an Aduocate that was wise, by leaue and by counsaile of other that were wise, and saied: The nede for the whiche we been assembled in this place, is full heauie thing, and a great matter, bicause of the wrong and of the wickednesse that hath be doen, and eke by reason of great damages, that in time comming been possible to fallen for thesame and eke by reason of the great riches and power of the parties bothe, for the whiche reasons, it wer a full great perill to erren in this matter. Wherfore, Melibeus this is our sentence, we counsaile you aboue al thing, that right anon thou doe thy diligence, in keping of thy proper person, in such a wise that thou ne wante none espie ne watche, thy body for to saue: And after that, we counsaile that in thine hous thou set sufficient garrison, so as thei maie as well thy bodie as thy hous defende: but certes to mouen warre, or to doen sodainly vengeaunce, we maie not deme in so little time, that it were profitable, wherfore we aske leiser and space, to haue deliberacion in this case to deme, for the commō prouerbe saith thus: He that sone demeth sone shall repent. And eke men sain, thilke Judge is wise that sone vnderstondeth a matter, & iudgeth by leiser: For all be it tariyng bee noifull, algate it is not to be reproued in yeuing of iudgement, ne in vengeaunce taking, whan it is sufficiente and reasonable. And that shewed our lorde Jesu Christ by ensample, for whan the woman was taken in auoutrie, and was brought in his presens to knowē what shuld bee doen of her persone, all be it that he wiste well himself what he would answere, yet ne would he not answere sodenly, but he would haue deliberaciō, and in the ground he wrote twise, and by this cause we aske deliberacion: and we shal thā by the grace of god counsaile you that thing that shall be profitable.

Up sterte than the yong folke at ones, and the most part of that companie haue shorned this olde wise man, and begon to make noise and said. Right so as whiles that iron is hot men should smite, right so men should wrekē her wronges while that thei been freshe and newe, and with loude voice thei cried, warre, warre. Up rose the one of the olde wise, and with his hond made countenaunce that thei should holden hem stil, & yeuen him audiēce. Lordinges (quod he) there is ful many a manne that crieth warre warre, that wote full lite what warre amounteth. Warre at his beginning hath so greate an entring and so large, that euery wight maie enter whā him liketh and lightly find warre: but certes what ende thereof shall fall, it is not lightly to knowe. Whan that warre is ones begon, there is full many a child vnborn of his mother, that shal sterue yong, bicause of thilke warre, other els liue in sorowe, or dien in wretchednesse: And

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therefore or that any warre be bigon, menne must haue greate counsaile and good deliberacion. And whan this old manne wende to enforcen his tale by reson, well nie al at ones bigon for to rise, for to breaken his tale, and bidden him full ofte his woordes to abregge: for certes he that preacheth to hem that liste not to heare his wordes, his sermon hem annoieth. For Jesus Sirake saieth, the weping in Muslike is a noious thinge. This is as moche to saie, as moche auaileth it to speake bifore folke to whiche his speache anoieth, as it is for to singen bifore hem that wepe. And whan this wise mã, saw that him wanted audience, all shamfast he set him adoun ayen. For Salomon saith: there as thou maist not haue audience, enforce thee not to speake I se well (q this wisemam) that the common Prouerbe is sothe, that good counsaile wanteth, whan it is moste nede.

Yet hadde this Melibeus in his counsaile many folke, that priuely in his eare counsailed him certain thinges, and counsailed him the contrary in generall audience. whã Melibeus had heard that the greatest part of his counsaile, were accorded that he should make warre, anon he consented to her counsailing and fully affirmed her sentence. Than dame Prudence, what that she sawe her husbonde hope him, for to awreke him on his enemies, and to begin warre: she in full humble wise, whan she sawe her time, saied to him these woordes. My Lorde (q she) I you beseche as hartly as I dare or can, ne haste you not to fast and for all guerdons yeue me audience. For Peter Alphons saieth. Who so doeth to thee good or harme, haste thee not to quite it, for in this wise thy frend wol abide, and thine enemie shall the lenger liue in dreade. The Prouerbe saieth, he hasteth well that wisely can abide: And in wicked haste is no profite.

This Melibe answerd to his wife Prudence: I purpose not (q he) to werke by thy counsaile, for many causes and reasons, for certes euery wighte would holde me than a foole. This is to saie, if I for thy counsailing would chaunge thinges that been ordained and affirmed by so many wise. Secondely, I saie that all women been wicked, and none good of hem al. For of a thousande men saith Salomon, I fonde one good man: but certes, of all women founde I neuer non. And also certes, if I gouerned me by thy counsaile, it should seme that I had yeue thee ouer me the maistrie: and God forbid that it so were. For Jesus Sirake saieth, that if the wife haue maistrie, she is contrarious to her husbonde. And Salomon saieth. Neuer in thy life, to thy wife, ne to thy childe, ne to thy frende, ne yeue no power ouer thy self, for better it wer that thy children, aske of thy thinges that hem nedeth, than thy self to be in the handes of thy children. And also if I woll werche by thy counsaile, certes my cõsaile must be sum time secrete, till it were time that it must bee knowen: and this ne maie not be, if I should be counsailed by thee. whan dame Prudence full debonairly and with great pacience, had heard all that her husbonde liked for to saie, thã asked she of him licence for to speake, and saied in this wise. My lorde (q she) as to your first reson, it maie lightly been answerd. For I saie that it is no folie to chaunge counsaile whan the thing is chaunged, or els whã the thing semeth otherwise than it semed afore. And moreouer I saie, though that ye haue swore & behight to performe your empryse, and by iust cause ye doe it not: men should not saie therfore ye wer a lier and forswore. For the boke saith, that the wise man maketh no lesing, whan he tourneth his corage for the better. And albeit that your empryse bee established, and ordeined by greate multitude of folke, yet dare you not accomplishe thilke ordinance but you liketh: for the trouth of thinges, and the profite been rather founden in fewe folke that been wise and full of reason, than by great multitude of folke, there euery man crieth and clattereth what him liketh: sothly soche multitude is not honest. And as to the second reason, where as ye saie, that al women been wicked: saue your grace. Certes ye dispise al women in this wise, and he that al dispiseth, as saith the boke, al displeaseth. And Senecke saieth, that who so woll haue sapience, shall no man dispraise, but he shall gladly teach the science that he can, without presumpcion or pride: and soche thinges as he nought ne cã, he shall not been a shamed to learne hem, and to enquire of lesse folke than himself. And that ther hath ben many a good woman, maie lightly be proued: for certes sir our lorde Jesu Christ nolde neuer han descended to be borne of a woman, if al women had be wicked, And after that, for the great bounte that is in womẽ, our lorde Jesu Christ, whan he was risen fro death to life, appered rather to a woman, thã to his Apostles. And though that Salomon saied, he founde neuer women good, it foloweth not therefore that all

Women

suche as seme and ben expert in many thinges, and ben approued in counsailing. For the boke saieth, that in olde menne is sapience, and in longe time the prudence. And Tullius saieth, that greate thinges ben not aye accomplished by strength, ne by deliuernesse of body, but by counsaile, by auctorite of persones, and by science: the whiche thre thinges ne ben not feable by age, but certes they enforce and encreace daye by daye and than shall ye hepe this for a generall rule.
Firste shall ye call to your counsayle a fewe of your frendes that ben especiall. For Salomon saieth, many frendes haue thou, but amonge a thousande chose thee one to bee thy counsailour: For al be it so that thou firste, ne tell thy Counsaile but to a fewe, thou maysse afterwarde tell it to moe folke if it be nede. But loke alwaie that thy counsailers haue those condicions that I haue sayd before, that is to saie, that thei be trew, wise, and of olde experience. And werke not alway in euery nede by one Counsailer alone: for sometime behoueth it to bee counsailed by manie. For Salomon saieth, saluacion of thinges is where as there be many counsaylers.

Nowe haue I tolde you of whiche folke ye shall be counsailed: nowe wol I tel you whiche counsaile ye ought to eschue. First ye shal eschue the counsailinge of fooles. Salomon saith, take no counsaile of a foole: for he woll counsaile but after his owne lust and his affeccion. The boke saith, that the propertie of a foole is this: He troweth lightly harme of euery man, and lightly troweth all bountie in himselfe. Thou shalte eschue the counsailing of all flatterers, which as enforcen hem rather to praise your person by flattery, than for to tell you the sothfastnesse of thinges.
Wherefore, Tullius saieth, amonge all the pestilence that ben in frendeship, the greatest is flatery. And therfore it is more nede that thou eschue and drede flaterers, than any other people. The boke saith, thou shalt rather flee fro the swete wordes of flateryng and praising, than fro the egre wordes of thy frendes that saith the sothes. Salomõ saith, that the wordes of a flaterer is a snare to catche innocence. He saith also, he that speketh to his frende wordes of flaterie and of plesaunce, he setteth a net before his fete to catche him. And therfore Tullius saith. Encline not thine eeres to flaterers, ne take no counsaile of flatterers. And Caton saieth. Auise the well, & eschue the wordes of swetenesse and of pleasaunce. And eke thou shalte eschue the counsailing of thine olde enemies that ben reconciled. The boke saith, that no wight returneth safelie into the grace of his olde enemie. And Isope saith, ne trust not to hem, to which thou hast somtime had warre or enemite; ne tel hem not thy counsaile. And Seneк telleth the cause why it maye not be, for he saieth, there as greate fire hath longe time endured, that there dwelleth some vapoure of hete. And therfore saith Salomon, in thine olde foe truste thou neuer. For sikerly though thine enemy be reconciled, & make the signe of humilite, and loute to the with his heed, truste him neuer: for certes he maketh thilke fained humilite more for his profite then for any humilite, or for any loue of thy person, bicause that he demeth to haue victory ouer thy persone by such fained countinaunce, the whiche victorie he might not haue by strife or warre. And Petrus Alphons saith, make no felowship with thine olde enemies, for if thou do hem bountie, they wollen peruert it to wickednesse. And eke thou must eschue the counsailing of hem that ben thy seruauntes, and beren thee greate reuerence: for perauenture they fain it more for drede than for loue. And therfore saith a philosopher in this wise. There is no wight partitly true to him that he dredeth. And Tullius saith, there is no might so great of any emperour that long may endure, but he haue loue of the people and drede. Ye shall eschue also the counsailing of folke that ben dronkelewe, for they ne can no counsaile hide. For Salomon saith, ther nis no priuite there as reigneth dronknesse. Ye shal haue also in suspecte the counsailing of suche folke as counsaile you one thing priuely, and coũsaile you the contrarie openly. For Catidorie saieth, that it is a maner of slieght to hinder his enemy when he sheweth to done a thing openly, and werketh priuely the contrary. Thou shalte haue also in suspecte the counsailinge of wicked folke, that be alwaie full of fraude. And Dauid saithe, that blissful is the manne that hath not folowed the counsaylinge of shrewes. Thou shalt also eschue the counsailing of yonge folke, for her counsailing is not ripe, as Salomon saieth.

Nowe sir, sithens I haue shewed you of suche folke as ye shal be counsailed of, and folowe it: nowe woll I teche you howe ye shall examine your counsayle. After the doctrine

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of Tullius, in examininge of youre counsailours, ye shall consider many thinges.

First thou shalt consider thilke thing that thou purposest, and vpon that thinge that thou woite haue counsaile, that very trueth be said and conserued, this is to say, tel truely thy tale for he that saieth false, may not well be counsailed in that case, of whiche he lieth. After this thou shalte consider the thinges that accorden to that thou purposest for to doe by thy counsailours, if reason accorde therto, and eke if thy might maie attaine therto: and if the more parte and the better parte of your counsailours accorden therto or no. Than shalt thou consider what thing shall folowe of her counsailinge: As hate, peace, warre, grace, profite, or domage, and many other thinges: and in all thinges thou shalte chose the beste, and weyue all other thinges. Than shalt thou consider of what rote is engendred the matter of thy counsaile, and what fruite it may cõceiue and engender. Thou shalt eke consider all the causes, from whenche they be sprong. And when thou haste examined thy counsaile, as I haue said, and which party is the better and more profitable, and haste approued it by many wise folke and olde, than thou shalt consider, if thou maiste performe it and make of it a good ende. For certes reason wol not that any man shal beginne a thinge, but if he might performe it as him ought: ne no wight shoulde take vpon him so heuie a charge, but that he might bere it. For the prouerbe saith, he that to muche embraceth distraineth litell. And Caton saith, assaie to do suche thinges as thou hast power to done, lest the charge oppresse the to sore, that the behoueth weiue thinge that thou haste begonne. And if so be that thou be in doute, whether thou maist perfourme a thing or none, chose rather for to suffer than to beginne. And Peter Alphons saieth, if thou hast might to do a thing, of which thou must repent, it is better holde thy tonge still than for to speke. Than maiste thou vnderstonde by stronger reasons, that if thou hast power to perfourme a werke of whiche thou shalte repent thee, than is it better thou suffer than begin. Wel saine they that defenden euerie wight to assaye a thing of whiche he is in dout whether he maye performe it or none. And after when ye haue examined your counsaile (as I haue saide before) and knowe well that ye maye performe your empryse: conferme it than sadly till it be at an ende.

Nowe it is reason and time that I shewe you, whan and wherfore that ye may chaũge your counsaile, withouten repryse. Sothly a man may chaunge his purpose and his counsaile, if the cause ceaseth, or whan a new case betideth. For the lawe saith, that vpon thinges that newly betideth, behoueth newe coũsaile. And Seneke saieth, if thy counsaile is come to the eeres of thine enemies, chaunge thy counsaile. Thou maiste also chaunge thy counsaile, if so be thou finde that by errour or by any other cause, harme or damage maie betide. Also if thy counsaile be dishoneste, other els come of dishoneste cause, chaunge thy counsaile. For the lawe saieth, that all behestes that be dishoneste, ne ben of no value: And eke, if so be that it be vnpossible or maye not gladly be perfourmed or kepte.

And take this for a generall rule, that euery counsaile that is enfourmed so strongly, that it may not be chaunged for no condicion that maie betide, I say that ilke counsaile is wicked.

Melibeus, when he had herde the doctrine of hys wyfe Dame Prudence, aunswerde in this wise. Dame (q he) as yet vnto this time ye han well taught me, as in gouernaile howe I shall gouerne me in the choslinge and in the withholdinge of my counsaile: But nowe would I faine that ye would condiscende in especiall, howe that ye semeth by our counsaylours that we haue chose in this present nede.

My lorde (q she) I beseche you in all humblesse, that ye woll not wilfully replie ayenst my resons, ne distemper your hert though I speke thing that you displese, for God wot as in mine entente, I speke it as for youre beste and for youre honoure and profite eke, and sothly I hope that your benignite woll take it in pacience. And trusteth me wel that your counsaile in this case ne shuld not (as to speke properly) be called a counsailinge, but a mocion or a mouinge of folye, in whiche counsaile ye haue erred in many a sondrie wise.

Firste ye haue erred in the assemblinge of your counsailours: For firste ye should haue cleped a fewe folke to your counsaile, and after ye might haue shewed it to mo, if it had be nede. But ye haue cleped to your counsaile a great multitude of people, ful chargeous and full noyous for to here. Also ye haue erred, for there as ye shoulde haue onelie cleped to your counsaile your trewe frendes, olde and

wise, ye haue cleped straunge folke, yonge folke, false flatterers, and enemies reconsiled, and folke that done you reuerence withouten loue. And eke ye haue erred, for ye haue brought with you to your counsaile, ire, couetise, and hastinesse, the which thre thinges ben contrary to euery good counsaile, honest and profitable, the whiche thre thinges ye haue not distroyed neither in your selfe ne in your counsailours, as ye ought. Ye haue erred also for ye haue shewed to your counsaylours your talent and your affectiõs to make warre anon, and for to doe vengeaunce, and they haue espide by your wordes, to what thing ye ben enclined: and therefore han they rather counsailed you to your talent, than to youre profite. Ye han erred eke, for it semeth that you sufficeth to haue bee counsailed by these counsailours onely, and with litle auisement, where as in so hie and in so great a nede, it had been necessarie mo counsailours, and more deliberacion to performe your empryse. Ye han erred also, for ye haue not examined your counsaile in the forsayd maters, ne in dewe maner as the case requireth. Ye haue erred also, for ye made no diuision betwene your trew frendes and your fayned counsailours: ne ye haue not knowen the will of your trew counsailours and frendes, olde, and wise, but ye haue casted all her wordes in an hochepot, and enclined your herte to the more parte and to the gretter nombre of fooles than of wise men. And therfore the counsaylinges that been at congregacions and multitudes of folke, there as men take more regarde to the nombre than to the sapience of persons, ye sene well, that in suche counsaylinges, fooles han the maistrie. Melibe answerde and said ayen: I graunt well that I haue erred, but there as thou hast told me here biforne, that he nis not to blame that chaungeth his coũsaile in certaine case, and for certaine and iuste cause, I am all redye to chaunge my counsailours righte as thou woldest deuise. The Prouerbe saieth, for to done sinne is manniche, but certes for to perceuer longe in sinne, is werke of the Diuell.

To this sentence answereth anon dame Prudence and saide: Examineth (q she) well youre counsayle, and let vs se whiche of hem hathe spoke moste resonably, and taughte you beste counsaile. And for as muche as the examinacion is necessarie, lette vs begin at Surgens and Phisiciens, that first spake of this mater. I say that Phisiciens and Surgiens haue saide you in your counsayle discretly, as hem ought: and in her speche saide full wisely, that to the office of hem appertaineth to donne to euerye wighte honoure and profite, and no wight to anoie, and after her crafte to done great diligẽce vnto the cure of hem, which they haue in her gouernaũce. And sir, right as they haue answerde wisely and discretly, righte so rede I that they ben hiely and souerainly guerdoned for her noble speche, and eke for they shull more done their ententife bisinesse in the curacion of your doughter, for al be it so they been your frendes, therfore shullen ye not suffre, that they serue you for naught, but ye ought thereafter guerdon hem, and pay hem her largesse. And as touching the prepolicion, whiche the Phisiciens entreteden in this case, this is to saine, that in maladies is, that contrarie is warished by an other contrarie: I wold faine knowe howe ye vnderstonde thilke texte, and what is your sentence. Certes (q Melibeus) I vnderstond it in this wise. Righte as they han done me a contrarie, so should I done hem an other, for righte as they han venged hem vpon me, and done me wronge, right so woll I venge me vpon hem, and done hem wrong, and than haue I cured one contrarye by an other.

Lo lo (q dame Prudence) howe lightly is euery mã enclined to his owne delire and his owne pleasaunce. Certes (q she) the wordes of the Phisiciens ne shoulde not ben vnderstõd in that wise, for certes wickednesse is not contrarie to wickednesse, ne vengeaunce is not contrarie to vengeaunce, ne wronge to wronge, but euerye of hem encreseth and engendreth other. But certes the wordes of the Phisiciens should be vnderstond in this wise, for good and wickednesse ben two cõtraries: and peace and warre, vengeaunce, and suffraunce, discord, and acorde, and many other thinges: But certes wickednesse shalbe warished with goodnes, discorde by acorde, warre by peace, and so forthe in other thinges. And therto acordeth saint Paule the Apostell in many places: He saith, ne yelde not harme for harme, ne wicked spech for wicked speche, but do wel to hem that don to the harme, and blesse them that saith the harme. And in many other places he amonisheth peace & acord. But now wol I speke of the counsaile which was yeue vnto you by menne of Lawe, and the wise folke, and olde folke, that sayden all

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by one acorde as ye herde beforne, that ouer all thinges ye shall done your beste diligence to kepe your persone, and to warnestore your house: And they saide also, that in this case ye ought to werchen ful wisely and with great deliberacion. And sir, as to the first pointe, that toucheth the keping of your person: ye shall vnderstonde that he that hath warre, shal euer deuoutly and mekely praien, biforne all thinges, that Jesu Christ of his mercy woll haue him in his protection, and to be his soueraine helper at his nede: For certes in this worlde there nis no wight that maie be counsailed and ikept sufficiētly with out the keping of our lorde Jesu Christe. To this sentence acordeth the Prophet Dauid that saith: If God ne kepte the Cite, in idel waketh he that it kepeth. Nowe sir, than should he committe the kepinge of your person to your true frendes, that ben approued and iknowe, and of him should ye aske helpe, your person to kepe. For Caton saith: If thou haue nede of helpe aske it of thy frendes, for there nis none so good a Phisicien as thy true frende. And after this than shall ye kepe you fro all straunge folke, and fro liers, and haue alwaie in suspecte her companie. For Peter Alphons saieth. Ne take no company by the waie of no straunge man, but if so be that thou haste knowen him of lenger time: And if so be that he fall in to thy companie, parauenture withouten thyne assente and good will, enquire than as subtelly as thou canste of his conuersacion, and of his life biforne, and faine thy waie, saiyng thou woldest go thider as thou wolte not go, and if he bere a spere, holde thee on the righte side of him, and if he beare a swerde, holde the on the lefte side of him. And than shall ye kepe you wisely from all maner of suche people as I haue saide you here beforne, and hem and her counsaile eschue. And after this than shall ye kepe you, in suche manner, that for anye presumpsion of your bodely strength, that ye dispise not ne acounte not the might of your aduersary so lite, that ye lette the kepinge of your person for your presumpcion, for euery wise man dredeth his enemy. And Salomon saith: A very foole is he that of al hath drede: But certes he that throwe hardenesse of his hert and through the hardinesse of him selfe, hath to great presumpcion, him shall yuell betide. Than shall ye euermore encounterwaite, enbushementes, and all espiaile. For Seneke saieth: The wise man that dredeth harmes, eschueth harmes: He ne falleth in to no perilles, that peril eschueth. And all be it so that thou seme, that thou be in secret place, yet shalt thou alwaie done diligence in keping of thy person, this is to saie, ne be not negligent to kepe thine owne person, not onely for thy greatest enemy, but also for thy leste enemy. Seneke saith, a man that is wel aduised, he dredeth his leste enemie. Ouide saieth, that the litel weasell wol slee the great Bulle and the wilde Herte. And the prouerbe saieth, that a litell thorne woll greue a king ful sore, and a litell hounde woll holde the wilde Bore. But natheless I say not thou shalt be so cowarde, that thou doute where as is no drede. The boke saieth, that some mē haue great luste to disceiue, but yet thei drede to be disceiued. And kepe thee fro the companie of shorners: For the boke saith, with shorners ne make no cōpany, but flie her wordes as venim.

Nowe as to the Seconde pointe, where as youre wyse Counsaylours counsayled, you to warnestore your house with great diligence, I woulde fayne knowe howe ye vnderstonde thilke wordes, and what is your sentence.

Melibeus answerde and said, certes I vnderstonde it in this wise, that I shall warnestore mine house with toures, suche as haue castels and other maner edifices, and armure and archeries, betwene whiche thinges I may my person and my house so kepe and defende, that mine enemies shullen bee in drede mine house to approche. To this sentence answerde anon Prudence. Warnishinge (q she) of hie toures and of hie edifices, is with great costages and with great trauaile, and whan that they ben accomplished, yet ben they not worth a strawe, but if they ben defended with trew frendes, that been olde and wise. And vnderstondeth well, that the gretest and the strongest garnison that riche men may haue, as well to kepen her person as her goodes is, that they be biloued with her subiectes, and with her neighbours. For thus saith Tullius, that there is a maner garrison, that no man maie venquishe ne discomfite, and that is a lorde to be biloued of his citezins, and of his people.

Nowe sir, as to the Thirde pointe, where as your olde and wise Counsailours saide, that ye ought not sodainly ne hastely procede in this nede, but that ye oughten puruayen and aparayle you in this case, with great

diligence and deliberacion. Verely I trowe that they saied right treuly and right soth. For Tullius saith: In euery dede or thou begin it, apparaile thee with great diligence. Than saie I, in vengeaūce taking, in warre, in bataile, and in warnestoringe, or thou begin I rede that thou aparaile the therto, and do it with great deliberacion. For Tullius saithe: The longe apparailing tofore the bataile, maketh short victorie. And Cassidorus saithe: The garrison is stronger, whan it is longe time auised. But nowe let vs speke of the Counsayle that was a yorded by youre neighbours, such as done you reuerēce without loue, your olde enemies reconciled, your flatterers, that counsailed you certaine thinges priuely, and openly counsailed you the contrarie. The yonge folke also, that counsailed you to venge you, and to make warre anon. Certes sir, as I haue saide byfore, ye haue greatlie erred to clepe suche maner of folke to your counsaile, whiche counsailours ben inoughe reproued by the resons aforesaid. But natheless let vs now discende to the speciall. Ye shull first procede after the doctrine of Tullius. Certes the trouthe of this mater or of this counsaile, nedeth not diligently to enquire, for it is well wiste, which they ben that han don you this trespas and villanie, and howe many trespasours, and in what maner they haue done all this wronge to you, and all this villany. And after this, than shull ye examine the seconde condicion, whiche Tullius addeth in this matter. For Tullius putteth a thing, whiche that he clepeth consenting: this is to saie, who ben thei, and whiche ben they, and howe manie, that consenten to thy coūsaile in thy wilfulnesse, to done hastie vengeaunce. And let vs consider also who ben they, and howe manie they ben that consented to your aduersaries. As to the firste point, it is well knowen whiche folke they be, that consented to your hastie wilfulnesse. For truely all tho that counsaile you to maken sodaine warre, ne be not your frendes. Let se nowe whiche ben they that ye holden so greatly your frendes, as to your person: For albeit so that ye be mighty and riche, certes ye been but a lone: for truely ye ne haue no childe but a doughter, ne ye haue no brethren ne Cosins Germains, ne none other nie kinrede, wherefore your enemies should stinte to plede with you, ne to distroy your person. Ye know also that your richesse mote bee dispended in diuerse parties. And whan that euerie wight hath his parte, they wollen take but litell regarde to venge your death. But thine enemies ben thre, and they haue many Brethern, Children, Cosins, and other nie kinrede: and though so were, that thou haddest slaine of hem two or thre, yet dwelleth there inowe to auenge her death, and to slee thy person. And though so be that your kinrede be more stedfaste and siker than the kinne of your aduersaries, yet neuer the lesse your kinrede is but after kinrede, for they ben but litell sibbe to you, and the kinne of your enemies ben nie sibbe to hem. And certes as in that, her condicion is better than is yours. Than lette vs consider also of the counsailinge of hem, that counsailed you to take sodaine vengeaunce, whether it accorde to reson or non: And certes ye knowe wel nay, for as by right and reson, there may no man take vengeaunce of no wight, but the iudge that hath iurisdiction of it, when it is graunted him to take vengeaunce hastelie, or attemperatlie as the Lawe requireth. And yet more ouer of thilke worde that Tullius clepeth consenting, thou shalte consent, if that thy mighte and thy power maye consente and suffise to thy wilfulnesse, and to thy counsailours: And certes thou maiste well saie naye, for sikerlye as for to speke properly, we maie doe nothing but suche thinge as we maie done rightfully: and certes rightfully ye may take no vengeaūce, as of your own proper auctorite. Than maye ye se that your power ne consenteth not ne accordeth not with your wilfulnesse. Nowe lette vs examine the thirde point, that Tullius clepeth cōsequence. Thou shalt vnderstonde that the vengeaunce that thou purposest for to take is consequent, and therof foloweth an other vengeaunce, perill, and warre, and other damages withouten nūbre, of which we be not ware, as at this time. And as touchinge the fourthe pointe, that Tullius clepeth engendring thou shalte consider, that this wrong, whiche that is don to the, is engendred of the hate of thin enemies, and of the vengeaunce taking vpon hem, that wolde engender a nother vengeaunce, and muchel sorow and wastinge of richesse, as I sayde ere. Nowe sir, as touchinge the fifte pointe, that Tully clepeth causes, whiche is the laste pointe, thou shalt vnderstonde, that the wronge that thou haste receiued hathe certayne causes, whiche that clerkes callen oryen, and effycien, and causa longinqua, and causa propinqua,

that

that is to saie, the ferre cause, and the nighe cause. The ferre cause is almightie God, that is cause of all thinges. The nere cause is the thre enemies. The cause accidētall was hate. The cause materiall, been the fiue woundes of thy doughter. The cause formalle, is the maner of their werking that brought ladders and clambe in at thy windowes. The cause finall was for to slea thy doughter, it letted not in as moche as in theim was. But for to speake of the ferre cause, as to what ende thei should come, or finally what shall betide of theim in this case, ne can I not deme, but by coniecting and supposing: For wee shall suppose that thei shall come to a wicked ende, bicause that the boke of decrees saieth. Seld or with greate paine, been causes brought to a good ende, whan thei been badly begon.

Now sir, if men would aske me, why that God suffered menne to doe you this villanie. Truly I can not wel answere, as for no sothfastnesse. For the Apostle saieth, that the sciences, and the iudgementes of our lorde God almightie been full depe, there maie no man comprehende ne searche hem. Natheless by certaine presumpcions and coniectinges, I hold and bileue, that God whiche that is full of Justice and of rightousnesse, hath suffered this betide, by iust cause reasonable.

Thy name is Melibee, this is to saie, a mā that drinketh Honie. Thou hast dronke so moche honie of swete temporell richesse, and delices of honours of this worlde, that thou art dronke, and hast forgotten Jesu Christe thy creatour: Thou ne hast not dooen to him soche honour and reuerēce as thee ought, ne thou ne hast not taken kepe to the wordes of Ouide, that saieth. Under the Honie of the gooddes of thy bodie, is hid the venime that slaeth thy soule.

And Salomon saieth: if it so be that thou hast found honie, eate of the same honie, that that suffiseth: for if so be that thou eate of the same honie out of measure, thou shalt spewe, and also be nedy and poore. And parauēture almightie God Jesu Christ, hath thee in dispite, and hath tourned awaie fro thee his face, and his eares of misericorde and mercie. And also he hath suffred and giue licēce, that thou thus shouldest bee punished and chastised, in the maner that thou hast trespased and offended. Thou hast doen sinne against our Lorde Christe, for certes the three enemies of mankinde, that is to saie: the flesshe, the fend, and the worlde, thou hast suffred hem entre into thine harte wilfully, by the windowes of thy bodie, and hast not defēded thy self sufficiētly ayenst their assaultes, and their temptacions, so that thei haue wounded thy soul in fiue places, this is to saie: the dedly sinnes that been entered into thy harte by thy fiue wittes. And in the same maner our Lorde Christ hath would and suffred, that thy three enemies been entered into thy hous, by the windowes, and haue wounded thy doughter in the forsaied maner.

Truely (q Melebee) I see well that ye enforce you moche by wordes to ouercome me, in soche maner, that I shall not benge me on mine enemies, shewing me ỹ perilles and the euils that might fall of this vengeaunce, but who so would consider in all vengeaunces, the perilles and euills that might sue of vengeaunce taking, a man would neuer take vengeaunce, and that were harme: for by the vengeaunce taking, been the wicked men discouered fro the good mē. And thei that haue will to doe wickednesse, restrain their wicked purpose, whā thei se the punishing and chastising of the trespasours: and yet saie I more that right as a singuler persone sinneth, in taking vengeaunce of an other man, right so sinneth the iudge, if he doe no vengeaunce of hem that haue deserued. For Seneke saieth thus: That maister he saith is good, that preueth shrewes. And as Cassiodor saieth: A mā dredeth to dooe outrages, whan he wote and knoweth, that it displeaseth to the Judges & soueraines. And an other saith: the iudge that dredeth to dooe right, maketh men shrewes. And sainct Poule the Apostle saieth in his Epistle, whan he writeth vnto the Romaines, that the Judge beare not the speare without cause, but thei beare it to punishe the shrewes and misdoers, and for to defende the good menne.

If ye woll than take vengeaunce of your enemies, ye shull retourne and haue your recourse to the Judge, that hath the iurisdiccion vpon hem, and he shall punish hem, as the lawe asketh and requireth.

A ha, saied Melibee, this vengeaunce liketh me nothing, I bethinke me now, and take heede how that fortune hath nourished me fro my childhode, and hath holpe me to passe many a strong paas: Now I would assaie her, trowing with Goddes help, that she shall helpe me my shame for to auenge.

TRuely saied Prudence, if ye woll werke by my counsaile, ye shall not assaie for-

tune by no waie: ne ye shall not lene or bowe vnto her, after the worde of Seneke. For thinges that been foolishly dooen, and that been dooen in hope of fortune, shall neuer come to good ende. And as thesame Seneke saith: the more clere and the more shining that fortune is, the more brittle and the soner broke she is. Trusteth not in her, for she is not stedfaste ne stable. For whā thou trowest to be moste sure and stedfast of her helpe, she woll faile and disceiue thee. And where as ye saie, that fortun hath nourished you fro your childhode, I say that in so moche ye shall the lesse trust in her, and in her wit. For Seneke saith: what man that is nourished by fortune, she maketh him a great foole. Now thā sith ye desire and aske vengeaunce, and the vengeaunce that is don after the lawe, and bifore the iudge, ne liketh you not, and the vengeaunce that is doen in hope of fortune, is perillous and vncertaine, than haue ye none other remedie, but for to haue your recourse vnto the souerain iudge, that vengeth al villanies and wronges. And he shal venge you, after that himself witnesseth, where as he saith: leaue the vengeaunce to me, and I shall doe it.

Melibe answerde, if I ne venge me of the villanie, that men haue dooen to me, I sommō or warne hem, that haue doen to me that villanie, and all other, to doe me an other villanie. For it is written: if thou take no vengeaunce of an old villanie, thou sommoneste thine aduersaries, to dooe thee a newe villanie: and also for my sufferaunce, men would dooe me so moche villanie, that I might neither beare it ne sustain it, and so should I bee put and holden ouer lowe. For men saine, in mithell suffring shall many thinges fall vnto thee, whiche thou shalt not mowe suffre.

Certes (q̄ Prudence) I graunt you, that ouer moche suffraunce is not good, but yet ne followeth it not therof, that euery persone, to whom men doe villanie, should take of it vēgeaunce: for that appertaineth and longeth all onely to Judges, for thei should venge the villanies and iniuries: And therefore those twoo auctorities, that ye haue saied afore, been onely vnderstonde in the Judges: For whan thei suffer ouer moche the wrōges and villanies to bee doen, without punishmente, thei sommon not a man all onely for to dooe newe wronges, but thei commaunde it. Also a wise man saith, that the Judge that correcteth not the sinner, cōmaundeth and biddeth him dooe sinne. And the Judges and soueraines, might in their londe so moche sufker of the shrewes and mildooers, that thei should by soche suffrance, by processe of time, were of soche power & might, that thei should put out the Judges and the Soueraines frō their places, and at laste, make hem lese her Lordshippes.

But let vs now suppose, that ye haue leue to venge you: I saie ye bee not of might and power, as now to venge you, for if ye woll make comparison vnto the might of your aduersaries, ye should finde in many thinges, that I haue shewed you er this, that their cōdicion is better than yours, and therfore saie I, that it is good as now, that ye suffer and be pacient.

Ferthermore, ye knowe wel that after the common sawe, it is a woodnesse, a manne to striue with a strōger, or a more mightie man than he is himself, & for to striue with a man of euen strength, that is to saie, with as strōg a manne as he is, it is peril: and for to striue with a weaker man, it is folie, and therefore should a manne flie striuing, as mikell as he might. For Salomon saieth: It is a greate worship to a man, to kepe him fro noise and strief: and if it so befall and hap, that a man of greate might and strength than thou art, doe thee greuaunce: studie and busie thee rather to still the same greuaunce, than for to venge thee. For Seneke saieth, that he putteth him in great perill, that striueth with a greater māne than he is himself. And Caton saieth, if a manne of higher estate or degre, or more mightie thā thou, doe thee anoy or greuaunce, suffer him: for he that ones hath greued thee, maie an other time releue thee and helpe thee. Yet sette I case ye haue licence for to venge you, I saie that there been full many thinges, that shall restrain you of vengeaunce taking, and make you for to encline to suffre, and for to haue pacience in the wronges that haue been doen to you. First and formest, if ye woll consider the fautes that been in your own persone, for whiche fautes God hath suffred you haue this tribulacion, as I haue saied to you here before. For the Poete saieth, that we ought pacientlý take the tribulacions that come to vs, whan that wee thinke and consider, that wee haue deserued to haue thē. And sainct Gregorie saieth, that whan a manne considereth well the nomber of his defautes and of his sinnes, the paines and the tribulacions that he suffereth, seme the lesse vnto him. And in as moche as him thinketh

thinketh his sinnes more heuie and greuous in so moche semeth his paine the lighter and the ealier vnto him. Also ye owe to encline and bowe your harte, to take the pacience of our Lorde Jesu Christ, as saieth sainct Peter in his Epistles. Jesu Christ he saith hath suffred for vs, and yeuen ensample to euery man to folowe and sue him, for he did neuer sinne ne neuer came there a villainous worde out of his mouth. Whan men cursed him, he cursed hem not. And whan mē bete him he manaced hem not. Also the great pacięce, which Sainctes that been in Paradise, haue had in tribulacion that thei haue suffered, without her deserte or gilte, ought moche stirre you to pacience. Ferthermore, ye shul enforce you to haue pacience, considering that the tribulacions of this worlde but little while endure, and soone passen been and gone, and the ioye that a man seketh to haue by pacience in tribulacions is perdurable, after that the Apostle saieth in his Epistle. The ioye of God he saieth, is perdurable, that is to saie, euerlasting. Also troweth and bileueth stedfastly, that he is not well norished and well taught, that can not haue pacięce, or wol not receiue pacience. For Salomon saieth, that the doctrine & the witte of a man, is knowen by pacience. And in an other place he saieth, that he that is pacient, gouerneth him by greate prudence.

And thesame Salomon saith. The angrie and wrothefull man maketh noises, and the pacient man attempreth and stilleth hem. He saith also, it is more worth to be pacient thā to be right strong. And he that maie haue the Lordship of his owne hart, is more to praise, than he that by his force or strengthe, taketh greate citees. And therefore saieth sainct James in his Epistle, that pacience is a greate vertue of perfeccion.

CErtes (q Melibee) I graunte you Dame Prudence, that pacience is a greate vertue of perfeccion, but euery manne maie not haue the perfeccion that ye seke, ne I am not of the nomber of right perfite men. For mine harte maie neuer bee in peace, vnto the time it be auenged. And albeit, so that it was great perill to mine enemies, to doe me a villanie, in taking vengeaunce vpō me, yet toke thei no heede of the perille, but fulfilled her wicked will and her corage: and therefore me thinketh men ought not repreue me, though I put me in a little perill, for to auenge me, and though I doe a greate excesse, that is to saie: that I benge one outrage by an other.

Ly (q dame Prudence) ye saie your will as you liketh: but in no case of the worlde, a man should not do outrage ne excesse, for to benge him. For Cassiodor saieth, that as euill doeth he, that bengeth him by outrage, as he that doeth the outrage. And therfore ye shall bēge you after the order of right, that is to saie, by the Lawe, and not by excesse, ne by outrage. And also if you wol benge you of the outrage of your aduersaries, in other maner thāright commaundeth, ye sinne. And therfore saieth Seneke: that a man shal neuer benge shrewdnesse by shrewdnesse. And if ye saie that right asketh to defende violence by violence, and fighting by fighting: certes ye saie soth, whā the defence is doen without interuall, or wout tariyng or delaie, for to defende him, and not for to benge him. And it behoueth that a man put soch attemperaunce in his defence, that men haue no cause ne matter to repreue him, that defendeth him of outrage and excesse, for els were it againe reason. Parde ye knowe well, that ye make no defence as now, for to defende you, but for to benge you: and so sheweth it, that ye haue no will to doe your deede attemperately, and therefore me thinketh that pacience is good. For Salomō saieth, that he that is not pacient, shall haue greate harme.

CErtes saied Melibe I graunte you, that whan a man is impaciente and wrothe, of that that toucheth him not, and that appertaineth not vnto him, though it harme him it is no wonder. For the lawe saith, that he is culpable, that entremetteth or medleth with soche thinges, as appertaineth not vnto him. And Salomon saith, that he that entremetteth of the noise or strieke of an other manne, is like to him that taketh a straunge hounde by the eares: for right as he, that taketh a straunge hounde by the eares, is other while bitten by the hond, right so in thesame wise, it is reason that he haue harme, that by his impacięce, medleth him of the noise of an other man, where as it appertaineth not vnto him. But ye knowe well that this deede, that is to saie, my griefand my disease, toucheth me right nigh. And therfore though I be wrothe and impacient, it is no meruaile: and sauing your grace, I can not see that it might greately harme me, though I toke vēgeaunce, for I am risher and more mightie.

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than mine enemies bee: And well knowe ye that by money and by hauyng greate possi-ssions, been all thinges of this worlde gouer-ned. And Salomon saieth, all these thinges obeie to money.

Whan Prudence had heard her husbonde, auaunte him of his richesse and his money, dispraising the power of his aduersaries, she spake and saied in this wise. Certes deare sir, I graunte you that ye be riche and mighty, and that the richesse is good to hem that haue well gotten hem, and that well can vse theim. For righte as the bodie of a manne maie not liue without the soule, no more maie it liue without the temporeil gooddes, and by richesse maie a manne get him greate frendes. And therefore saieth Pamphillus: If a Perthes doughter be saieth be riche, she maie chese of a thousande menne, whiche she woll take to her husbonde: for of a thousand one woll not forsake her ne refuse her. And this Pamphillus saith also: if thou be right happie, that is to saie, if thou bee riche, thou shalte finde a greate nomber of fellowes and frendes. And if thy fortune chaunge, fare-well frenship and felowship, for thou shalte be alone without any companie, but if it bee the companie of poore folke. And yet saieth this Pamphillus more ouer, that thei that been bonde and thrall of linage, shal be made worthy and noble by the richesses. And right so as by the richesses there come many good-nesses, right so by pouertie come there many harmes and euilles, for greate pouertie con-straineth a manne to doe many euilles. And therefore calleth Casiodor pouertie the mo-ther of ruine, that is to saie, the mother of o-uerthrowing or of falling doune. And ther-fore saieth Peter Alfolce: One of the greatest aduersities of this world, is whan a fre man by kinde or of birth, is constrained by pouer-tie, to eate the alnose of his enemie. And the same saieth Innocente, in one of his bookes: He saith, that sorowfull and mishappe is the condicion of a poore begger, for if he aske not his meate, he dieth for hunger, and if he aske he dieth for shame: and algates necessite con-straineth him to aske. And therefore saieth Salomon, that better is to die, than for to haue soche pouertie. And as the same Salo-mon saieth: Better it is to die of bitter death, than for to liue in soche wise. By these rea-sons that I haue saied vnto you, and by ma-ny other reasons that I could saie, I graunt you that richesses been good, to hem that hem well getten, and to hem that well vsen tho richesses: And therefore woll I shewe you how ye shall behaue you in gathering of ri-chesses, & in what maner ye shullen vse hem.

Firste, ye shall gette hem withouten great desire, by good leiser, sokingly and not ouer hastely, for a manne that is to desiring to get richesse, habandoneth him firste to theft and to all other euilles. And therfore saieth Sa-lomon: he that hasteth him to busily to were riche, he shall bee none innocente. He saieth also, that the richesse that hastly commeth to a manne, sone and lightly goeth and passeth from a manne, but that richesse that cometh little and little, wereth alwaie and multipli-eth. And sir, ye shall get richesse by your wit and by your trauaile, vnto your profite, and that without wrong or harme doing to any other persone. For the Lawe saieth, there maketh no manne him self riche, if he dooe harme to an other wight, this is to saie: that nature defendeth and forbiddeth by righte, that no manne make himself riche, vnto the harme of an other person. And Tullius saith that no sorowe ne no dreade of death, ne no-thing that maie fall vnto a man, is so moche ayenst nature, as a man to encreace his own profite, to the harme of an other mane. And though the greate and mightie menne, gette richesses more lightly than thou, yet shalte thou not bee idle, ne slowe to doe thy profite, for thou shalte in all wise flie idlenesse. For Salomon saith, that idlenesse teacheth a mā to doe many euills. And the same Salomon saieth, that he that trauaileth and busieth him to tilthe his londe, shal gate bread: but he that is idell, and casteth him to no businesse ne occupaciō, shall fall into pouertie, and die for hunger. And he that is idell and slowe, cā neuer find couenable time for to doe his pro-fite. For there is a verifier saieth, that the i-dell manne excuseth him in Winter, bicause of the greate cold, and in Sommer bicause of the heate. For these causes saith Caton, wa-keth and encline you not ouer moche for to slepe, for ouer moche rest nourisheth and cau-seth many vices. And therefore saieth sainct Hierom, doe some good deedes, that the deuil whiche is our enemie, ne finde you not vnoc-cupied, for the deuil ne taketh not lightly vn-to his werking, soche as he findeth occupied in good werkes.

Than thus, in getting richesses ye must flie idlenesse. And afterwarde ye shull vse the ri-chesses, whiche ye haue gote by your wit and

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by your trauaile, in soche maner, that men hold you not to scarce, ne to sparing, ne foole large, that is to saie, ouer large a spender: for right as men blame an auaricious man, bicause of his scarcitie and chincherie, in the same wise is he to blame, that spendeth ouer largely. And therefore saith Caton: vse (saith he) the richesses that thou hast gottē in soche maner, that menne maie haue no matter, ne cause to call thee nother wretche ne chinche: for it is a great shame to a manne, to haue a poore harte, and a riche purse. He saieth also, the goodes that thou hast gote, vse theim by measure, that is to saie, spende measurably, for thei that foolishly waste and dispēde the goodes that thei haue, whā thei haue no more proper of her own, than thei shape hem to take the goodes of an other manne. I saie than that ye shall flie auarice, vsing your richesse in soche maner, that men saie not that your richesses been buried, but that ye haue hem in your might, and in your welding. For a wise man reproueth the auaricious man, and saieth thus in this verses two. Whereto and why burieth a manne his goodes by his great auarice, and knoweth well, that nedes he must die, for death is the ende of euery mā, as in this present life: And for what cause or encheson ioineth he him, or knitteth he him so faste vnto his gooddes, that all his wittes mowe not disceuer him, ne departe him fro his gooddes, and knoweth well, or ought to knowe, that whan he is ded, he shall nothing beare with him out of this worlde.

And therfore saieth sainct Augustin, that the auaricious manne is likened vnto helle, that the more it swalloweth, the more desire it hath to swalowe and deuoure. And as wel as ye would eschue, to bee called an auaricious manne or chinche, as wel should ye kepe and gouerne you in soche a wise, that menne call you not foole large. Therfore saith Tullius: The goodes of thine hous, ne should not be hid ne kept so close, but that thei might be opened by pite and debonairte, that is to saie to yeue hem parte that haue greate nede. Ne thy goodes should not be so open, to be euery mannes gooddes. After warde in getting of your richesses, and in vsing hem, ye shall alwaie haue three thinges in your harte, that is to saie, our lorde God, conscience, and good name. First, ye shall haue God in your harte, and for no richesse ye should dooe any thing, whiche maie in any maner displease GOD your creatour & maker. For after the worde of Salomon, it is better to haue a little good with the loue of GOD, than to haue moche good and Treasoure, and lese the loue of his Lorde GOD. And the Prophete saieth, that better it is to be a good manne, and haue little good and Treasoure, than to bee holden a shrewe, and haue greate richesse. And yet I saie ferthermore, that ye should alwaie dooe your businesse to gette you richesse, so that ye get hem with good conscience. And the Apostle saith, that there nis thing in this world, of whiche wee should haue so greate ioye, as whan our conscience beareth vs good witnesse. And the wise manne saieth: That the substaunce of a manne is full good, whan sin is not in mannes conscience. After warde in getting of your richesses, and in vsing of hem ye must haue greate businesse, and greate diligence, that your good name be alwaie kept and cōserued. For Salomon saieth, that better it is, and more it auaileth a man to haue a good name, than for to haue many richesses: And therfore he saieth in an other place. Doe greate diligence saieth Salomon, in keping of thy frendes, and of thy good name, for it shall lenger abide with thee, than any treasoure, be it neuer so precious. And certes he should not bee called a greate gentleman, that after God and good conscience all thinges left, ne doeth his diligence and businesse, to keepe his good name. And Cassiodor saith, that it is a signe of a gentle harte, whan a manne loueth and desireth to haue a good name. And therefore saieth sainct Augustin, that there been two thinges that been right necessarie and also nedefull: and that is good conscience, and good lose, that is to saie: good conscience to thine owne persone inwarde, and good lose for thy neighbour outwarde. And he that trusteth hym so moche in his good conscience, that he dispiseth and setteth at nought his good name or lose, and receth not though he kepe not his good name, nis but a cruell churle.

Sir, now haue I shewed you how ye shuld dooe in getting richesses, and how ye should vse hem: and I se well that for the trust that ye haue in your richesses, ye wol moue warre and battaile. I counsaile you that ye begin no warre, in trusse of your richesses, for thei ne suffise not warres to maintain. And therfore saieth a Philosopher: That manne that desireth and would algates haue warre, shal neuer haue suffisaunce: for the richer that he is, the greater dispences muste he make, if he

woll haue worshyp and victorie. And Salomon saith, that the great richesses that a mā hath, the more dispēdours he hath. And therfore, sir, albeit so that for your riches, ye may haue moche folke, yet behoueth it not, ne it is not good to begin warre, where as ye maie in other maner haue peace, vnto your worshyp and profite: For the victorie of battailes that been in this worlde, lieth not in greate nomber or multitude of people, ne in the vertue of man, but it lieth in the will, and in the hond of our lorde God almightie. And therfore Judas Machabeus, whiche was Gods knight, whan he should fight against his aduersarie, that had a greater nōber, and a greater multitude of folke, and strōger than was his people of Machabe, yet he recomforted his little companie, and saied right in this wise: Also lightly saith he, maie our Lorde God almightie, yeue victorie to a fewe folke, as to many folke, for the victorie of a battaile, commeth not by the greate nomber of people, but it cōmeth from our Lorde GOD of heauen. And deare sir, for as moche as there is no manne certaine, if it be worthie that God yeue him victorie or not, after that Salomon saieth, therefore euery manne should greatly dreade warres to begin: and bicause that in battailes fall many perills, & happeth other while, that as sone is the great manne slain, as the little manne. And as it is written in the seconde booke of Kinges: The deedes of battailes ben auēturous, and nothing certain, for as lightly is one hurte with a Speare, as an other: and for there is greate peril in warre, therefore should a man flie and eschue warre in as moche as a manne maie goodly. For Salomon saieth, he that loueth perille, shall fall in perill.

After that Dame Prudence had spoken in this maner, Melibe answerde and saied. I se well dame Prudence, that by your faire wordes and youre reasons, that ye haue shewed me, that the warre liketh you nothing, but I haue not yet heard your counsaile, howe I shall doe in this nede.

Certes (saied she) I counsaile you that ye accorde with your aduersaries, and that ye haue peace with hem. For sainct James saith in his Epistle: That by concorde and peace, small riches were greate: and by debate and discorde, riches decaie. And ye knowe well, that one of the greatest and moste soueraine thing that is in this worlde, is vnite & peace. And therefore saieth our Lorde Jesu Christe to his Apostles, in this wise: wel happy been thei, that loue and purchase peace, for thei be called the children of God. Ah, saied Melibe, now se I well, that ye loue not mine honour ne my worshyp. ye knowe well that mine aduersaries, haue begon this debate and brige by their outrage. And ye se well that thei ne require ne praie me of peace, ne thei aske not to be recōciled. Woll ye than that I go meke me, and obeye me to hem, and crye hem mercie? For so the that were not my worshyp. For right as menne saie, ouer greate humblenes engendereth dispraising, so fareth it by to greate humilite or mekenesse.

Than began dame Prudence to make semblaunte of wrathe, and saied: Certes sir, saue your grace. I loue your honour and profite, as I doe mine owne, and euer haue doe: ye ne none other neuer see the contrary. And yet, if I had saied, that ye should haue purchased peace and recōciliacion, I ne had moche mistake me, ne saied a misse. For the wise man saieth: the discencion beginneth by an other man, and the reconciling beginneth by thy self. And the Prophete saieth: flie shrewdnes and doe goodnesse, seke peace and foloweit, in as moche as in thee is. yet saie I not, that ye should rather pursue to your aduersaries for peace, thā thei should to you: for I knowe well that ye been so hard harted, that ye wol doe nothing for me. And Salomon saieth: he that hath ouer harde an harte, he at last shall mishappe or misbetide.

Whan Melibe had heard dame Prudence make semblaunte of wrathe, he saied in this wise. Dame I praie you, that ye be not displeased of thing that I saie, for ye know wel that I am angrie and wrothe, and that is no wonder: and thei that been wrothe, wot not well what thei doe, ne what thei saie. Therefore the Prophete saieth: that troubled eyen haue no cleare sight. But saie and counsaile me as you liketh, for I am ready to doe right as ye woll desire: And if ye repreue me of my folie, I am the more holdē to loue and praise you. For Salomon saith, that he that repreueth him that doeth folie, he shall finde greater grace, than he that deceiueth hym by swete wordes.

Than saied Dame Prudence, I make no semblaūt of wrath ne of anger, but for your greate profite, for Salomon saith: he is more wrothe, that repreueth or chideth a foole for his folie, shewing him semblaunt of wrath, than he that supporteth him and praiseth

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him in his mistoyng, and laugheth at his folie. And this same Salomon saieth afterwarde: That by the sorowfull visage of a manne, that is to saye, by the sorie and heuy countenaunce of a manne, the sole correcteth and amendeth him selfe.

Than said Melibe, I shall not conne aunswere vnto so manie faire reasons as ye put to me and shewe: saye shortly your will and your counsaile, and I am al redy to performe and fulfill it.

Than Dame Prudence discouered all her will vnto him and said. I counsaile you (said she) aboue all thinges, that ye make peace bitwene God and you, and be reconsiled vnto him and to his grace, for as I haue saide you here before, god hath suffred you to haue this tribulacion and disease for your sinnes: and if ye do as I saye you, God woll sende youre aduersaries vnto you, and make hem fall at your fete, redy to do your will and your commaundement. For Salomon saieth, whan the condicion of man is pleasaunt and liking to God, he chaungeth the hertes of the mans aduersaries, and constraineth hem to beseche him of peace and of grace. And I pray you let me speke with your aduersaries priuely, for thy shall not knowe that it be of your wil or your assent: And than whan I knowe their will and their entent, I maye counsaile you the more surely.

Dame saide Melibe, doeth your will and your liking, for I put me holly in your disposicion and ordinaunce.

Than dame Prudence, whan she sawe the good will of her husbonde, delibered and toke aduise in her selfe, thinking howe she might bringe this nede vnto a good conclusion and to a good ende: And whan she sawe her time, she sente for these aduersaries to come vnto her in a priue place. And shewed wisely vnto hem the great goodes that come of peace, and the great harmes and perils that ben in warre, and said to hem in a goodlye maner: how that hem ought haue great repētaunce of the iniury and wrong, that they had done to Melibeus her lord, and vnto her and to her doughter.

And whan they herd the goodly wordes of Dame Prudence, they were so supprised and rauished, and had so gret ioye of her, that wōder was to tell.

Ah, lady (saide they) ye haue shewed vnto vs the blissinge of swetnesse after the saying of Dauid the Prophet. For thereconsiling whiche we be not worthy to haue in no manere. But we ought require it with greate cōtricion and humilite, that ye of your goodnesse haue presented vnto vs. Now se we wel, that the science and conning of Salomon is full trewe, for he saith: That swete wordes multiply and encreace frendes, and maketh shrewes to be debonaire and meke.

Certes (said they) we put our deede and all our matter and cause, all holly in your good will, and been redy to obey at the commaundement of our lorde Melibeus. And therfore dere and benigne lady: we praie and beseche you, as mekely as we can and maie, that it like vnto your greate goodnesse, to fulfill in dede, your goodly wordes. For we consider and knowe, that we haue offended and greued our Lorde Melibeus out of measure: so ferforthe ỹ we be nat of power to make him amendes. And therfore we oblige and binde vs and our frendes, for to doe all at his will and commaundemente: but parauenture he hath suche heuinesse, and suche wrathe to vs warde, bycause of our offence, that he woll enioyne vs suche a paine, as we mowe not beare ne sustayne. And therefore noble lady, we beseche your womanly pite, to take suche aduisement in this nede, that we ne oure frendes be nat disherited ne distroied, through our foly.

Certes (said Prudence) it is an harde thing and right perillous, that a man put him all vtterly in arbitracion and iudgement, and in the might and power of his enemie: For Salomon saith: leueth me, and yeueth credence to that I shal say: Ne yeueth neuer the power ne gouernaunce of thy goodes, to thy son, to thy wife, to thy frende, ne to thy brother: ne yeue thou neuer mighte ne mastrye ouer thy body while thou liuest. Nowe, sith he defendeth that a man should nat yeue to his brother ne to his frende, the might of his bodye. By a stronger reason he defendeth and forbideth a manne to yeue himselfe to his enemie. And natheless I counsaile you that ye mistrust nat my lorde: for I wote well and know verely, that he is debonair and mene, large, curteis, and nothing delirous ne couitous of goodes ne riches. For there is nothing in this worlde that he desireth, saue onlye worship and honoure. Ferthermore I knowe, and am right sure, that he shall nothinge doe in this nede, without my counsaile: and I shall so werke in this case, that by the grace of oure lorde God, ye shall be reconsiled vnto vs.

Than saide they with one voice, worshipful lady we put vs & our goodes all fully in your will and disposicion, and been redy to come, what daie that it liketh vnto your noblesse to limite vs or assine vs for to make our obligacion and bonde, as stronge as it liketh vnto your goodnesse, that we nowe fulfill the wil of you and of my lorde Melibe.

When dame Prudēce had herd the answere of these men, she bad hem goe ayen priuely and she returned to her lord Melibe, and tolde him howe she founde his aduersaries full repentaunt, knowleging full lowly her sinnes and trespas, and how thei were redy to suffer all paine, requiring and praiyng him of mercy and pite.

Than saide Melibe, he is well worthy to haue pardon and forgeuenesse of his sinne, that excuseth not his sinne, but knowlegeth and repenteth him, asking indulgence. For Seneke saith, there is the remission and forgeuenesse, where as the confession is: for confession is neighbour to innocence. And therefore I assent and confirme me to haue peace, but it is good that we doe nought without the assent and wil of our frendes.

Than was Prudence right gladde and ioyfull, and saide: Certes sir, ye haue well and goodly answerde: for right as by the counsaile, assente, and helpe of your frendes, ye haue be steered to benge you and make war: Right so, without her counsayle shall ye not accorde you, ne haue peace with your aduersaries. For the lawe saieth: there is nothing so good, by waie of kinde, as a thing to be vnbounde by him that it was ibounde.

Than dame Prudence, without delay or tariyng, sent anone her messanger, for her kinsfolke and her olde frendes, whiche that were trewe and wise: and tolde hem by order, in the presence of Melibe, all the mater, as it is aboue expressed and declared. And praied hem that they would saye their aduise and counsaile, what best were to do in this nede. And when Melibeus frendes had taken her aduise and deliberacion of the forsaide mater, and had examined it by greate besinesse and diligence. Thei gaue ful counsaile for to haue peace and reste, and that Melibe should receiue with good hert his aduersaries, to forgeuenesse and mercy.

And when dame Prudence had herde thassent of her lorde Melibe, and the counsaile of his frendes accorde with her will and her entencion, she was wonderly glad in her hert, and said. There is an olde prouerbe (saide she) That the goodnesse that thou maiste doe this daie, doe it, and abide it not, ne delay it nat till the nexte daye. And therefore I counsayle, that ye sende your messengers, suche as be discrete and wise, vnto your aduersaries: telling hem on your behalfe, that if they woll treate of peace and accorde, that they shape hem without delay or tariyng, to come vnto vs: whiche thinge performed was in dede. And when these trespassours, and repenting folke of her folies, that is to saye, the aduersaries of Melibeus, had herde what these messengers saide vnto hem, they were right gladde and ioyfull, and answerde full mekely and benignely, yeldinge grace and thankes to her lorde, Melibee, and to all his companie: and shope hem without delaye to go with the messengers, and obeyed the commaundement of her lorde Melibeus. And right anone they toke her waye to the court of Melibe, and tooke with hem some of their true frendes, to make faith for hem, and for to be her borowes: And whan they were comen to the presence of Melibe, he said to hem these wordes. It stondeth thus, said Melibe, and sothe it is, that causelesse and without skill and reason, ye haue done great iniuries and wronges to me and my wife Prudence, and to my doughter also, for ye haue entred in to my house by violēce, and haue don such outrage, that all men know wel that ye haue deserued dethe. And therefore woll I knowe and wete of you, whether ye woll put the punishing and the chastising and the vengeaūce of this outrage, in the will of me and of my wife, or ye wol not.

Then the wisest of hem thre answerde for hem al, and said. Sir (said he) we knowe well that we ben vnworthy to come to the courte of so great a lorde and so worthy as ye be, for we haue so greatly mistaken vs, and haue offended and agilted in such wise againe your high lordeship, that truely we haue deserued the dethe, but yet for the great goodnesse and debonairte, that all the worlde witnesseth of your person, we submitte vs to the excellence and benignite of your gracious lordeshippe, and ben redy to obey to all your commaundementes, beseching you, that of your merciable pite ye woll consider our great repentaunce, and lowe submission, and graunte vs forgeuenesse of our outragious trespasse and offence: for wel we knowe, that your liberall grace and mercye stretche ferther in to the

goodnesse

goodnesse, than doen our outragious giltes and trespasses into the wickednesse. Al be it that cursidly and dampnably we haue agilted against your high lordship.

Whan Melibe toke hem vp fro the ground full benignely, and receiued her obligacions and her bondes, by her othes vpon her pledges and borowes, and assyned hem a certaine day to returne vnto his court for to receyue and accept sentence and iudgement, that Melibeus would commaunde to be don on hem, by the causes aforsaid, which thinges ordained, euery man returned to his house.

And when dame Prudence sawe her time, she fained and asked her lorde Melibe, what vengeaunce he thought take on his aduersaries.

To which Melibe answerde, and said: Certes (said he), I thinke and purpose me fully to disherite hem of all that euer they haue, and for to put them in exile for euer.

Certes said dame Prudence, this were a cruell sentence, and muche ayenst reason. For ye be riche inough, and haue no nede of other mennes riches. And ye might lightly in this wise gete you a couetous name, whiche is a vicious thing, and ought be eschewed of euery good man. For after the saiyng of the apostel. Couetise is rote of all harmes. And therfore it were better to you lese so muche good of your owne, than for to take of their good in this maner. For better it is to lese good with worship, than to winne good with villanie and shame. And euery man ought to do his diligence and his businesse, to gete him a good name. And yet shall he not only busy him in kepinge his good name, but he shall also enforce him alwaie to doe some thinge, by whiche he maye renewe his good name. For it is written, that the olde good lose of a manne or good name, is soone gon and passe, whan it is not renewed. And as touchinge, that ye saie that ye woll exile your aduersaries: that thinketh me muche ayenst reason, and out of measure, considringe the power, that they haue yeue you vpon them self. And it is writtē: that he is worthy to lose his priuilege, that misuseth the mighte and power that is giuen him. And I sette case, ye might enioyne hem that paine by righte and lawe, whiche I trowe ye maie not doe: I saie, ye might not put it to execution, for peraventure than it were like to turne to the warre, as it was before. And therfore if ye woll that men do you obeisaunce, ye must demeane you more courteisly, that is to saye: ye muste yeue more easy sentences and iudgement. For it is written: he that most curteisly cōmaundeth, to him men mooste obey. And therfore I praye you, that in this necessite and in this nede, ye caste ye to ouercome your hert. For as Seneca saieth: he that ouercometh his hert, ouercometh twise. And Tully saieth: there is nothing so cōmendable in a great lord, as when he is debonaire and mebe, and apeseth him lightly. And I pray you that ye wol now forbere to do vengeaunce in suche a maner, that your good name maie be kept and conserued, and that men maie haue cause and matter to praise you of pite and mercy: and that ye haue no cause to repent you of thing that is done. For Seneke saith: he ouercometh in an yuell manere, that repenteth him of his victorie. Wherfore I praye you, lette mercy be in your hert, to theffect and entent, that god almightie haue mercie vpon you in his laste iudgement. For saint James saieth in his Epistel: iudgement without mercy shal be do to him, that hath no mercy of another wight.

Whan Melibe had herde the great skilles and reasons of dame Prudence, and her wise informacions and teachinges, his herte gan encline to the will of his wife: considring her trewe entent, confirmed him anon and assented fully to worke after her counsayle: and thanked God, of whome procedeth all goodnesse and vertue, that him had sent a wife of so greate discretion. And whan the day came that his aduersaries should apeare in his presence, he spake to hem goodly, and saide in this wise.

Al be it so, that of your pride and high presumpcion and folie, and of your negligence and vnconninge, ye haue misborne you, and trespaced vnto me, yet for as mikell as I se and beholde your great humilite, and that ye be sory and repentaunt of your giltes, it constraineth me to doe you grace & mercy: Wherfore I receiue you to my grace, and forgeue you holly all the offences, iniuries, and wronges, that ye haue doen ayenste me and mine, to theffecte and ende, that God of his endelesse mercy woll at the time of our dyinge forgeue vs our giltes, that we haue trespaced to him in this wretched worlde. For doutlesse if we bee sory and repentaunt for the sinnes and giltes, whiche we haue trespaced in the sight of our lord God: he is so fre and so mer-

ciable, that he woll forgiue vs our giltes, and bring vs to the blisse that neuer shal haue ende. Amen.

Here endeth the tale of Chaucer, and here foloweth the Monkes prologue.

WHan ended was the tale of Melibee
And of Prudence, and her benignite
Our hoste saide, as I am faithful man
And by the precious corps Madrian
I had leuer than a barel of ale
That goodlefe my wife had herde this tale
For she nothing is of suche pacience
As was this Melibeus wife Prudence
By goddes bones, when I bete my knaues
She bringeth me the great clubbed staues
And crieth, slee the dogges euerichone
And breke bothe backe and euery bone
And if that any neighbour of mine
Wol not in churche to my wife encline
Or be so hardy, to her to trespace
Whā she cometh home, she rampeth i my face
And crieth false cowarde wreke thy wife
By corpus domini, I wol haue thy knife
And thou shalt haue my distaf, & go spinne
Fro day til night, she wol thus beginne.
Alas she saith, that euer she was shape
To wedde a milksop, a cowarde ape
That wol be ouerleide with euery wight
Thou darst not stonde by thy wiues right
This is my life, but if that I woll fight
And out at doore, anon I mote me dight
And els I am lorne, but if that I
Be like a wilde lion, fole hardy
I wot wel she wol do me slee some day
Some neighbour, and than go my way
For I am perilous with knife in honde
Al be it that I dare not her withstonde
For she is bigge in armes by my faith
That shal he finde, that her misdooth or saith
But let vs passe away from this mattere
My lord he said, sir mōke: be mery of chere
For ye shall tell vs a tale truely
Lo Rochester stondeth here fast by
Ride forth min own lord, breke not our game
But by my trouth I know not your name
Wheder I shal cal you my lorde dan Iohn
Or dan Thomas, dan Robert, or dan Albon
Or of what house be ye, by your father kin
I vowe to God, thou hast a ful faire chin
It is a gentle pasture ther thou gost
Thou art not like a pinaunt or a ghost
Vppon my faith thou arte some officere
Some worthy Sexten, or some Celerere
For by my fathers soule, as to my dome
Thou art a maister, when thou art at home
No poore cloisterer, ne no poore nouise
But a gouernour ware and wise
And therwith of braune and of bones
A wel faring person for the nones
I praie to God yeue him confusion
That first the brought in to religion
Thou woldest be a trede foule aright
Haddest thou as great leue, as ỹ haste might
To pefrourme al thy lust in ingendrure
Thou haddest begotten many a creature
Alas, why werest thou so wide a cope
God yeue me sorowe, and I were pope
Not onely thou but euery mighty man
Though he were shore high vpon his pan
Should haue a wife, for al this world is lorn
Religion hath take vp al the corne
Of treding, and drel men ben shrimpes
Of feble trees there cometh wretched impes
This maketh that our heires be so slender
And feble, that thei may not well engender
This maketh that our wiues wol assay
Religious folke, for they may better pay
Of Venus paimentes, than mowe we
God wote no lustheburghs paie ye
But be not wroth my lord, though I play
Ful ofte in game a sothe haue I herde say.
This worthy monke toke al in pacience
And said, I wol do my diligence
As ferre as souneth into honeste
To tell you a tale, ye two or thre
And if ye liste to herken hitherwarde
I wol you saine, the life of saint Edwarde
Or els tragidies first I wol tell
Of whiche I haue an hundred in my cell.
Tragidy is to tell a certaine storie
As olde bokes maken memorie
Of hem that stode in great prosperite
And be fallen out of hie degre
In to misery, and ended wretchedly
And thei ben verified comenly
Of fire fete, whiche men cal exemetron
In prose eke ben endited many on
And in metre, many a sondry wise
Lo, this ought inough to suffise
Now herkeneth, if you list for to here
But first I beseche you in this matere
Though I by order tell not these thinges
Be it of Popes, Emperours, or Kinges

After

After her ages, as men writen finde
But tellen hem, some before & some behinde
As it cometh nowe to my remembraunce
Haue me excused of mine ignoraunce.

¶ Here endeth the Monkes prologue, and here beginneth his tale.

Will bewaile in maner of tragedy
The harme of hem that stoden in hie degre
And fill, so that ther nas no remedy
To bring hem out of her aduersite
For certaine, whan that fortune list to flie
There may no man of her ♁ course withholde
Lette no man trust on blinde prosperite
Beth ware by this ensample yonge and olde.

Lucifer.

At Lucifer, though he an angel were
And nat a man, at him will I beginne
For though fortune may nat angel dere
From hie degre, yet fel he for his sinne
Doun in to hell, where he is yet inne
O Lucifer, brightest of angels all
Now art thou Sathanas, ♁ maist not twin
Out of misery, in whiche thou art fall.

Adam.

Lo Adam, in the felde of Damascene
With goddes owne finger wrought was he
And not begoten of mannes sperm vnclene
And welte al paradise sauing o tree
Neuer worldely man had so hie degre
As Adam, til he for misgouernaunce
Was driuen out of his high prosperite
To labour and to hell, and to mischaunce

Sampson.

Lo Sampson, which that was annũciate
By the angel, longe or his natiuite
And was to God almighty consecrate
And stode in nobles while he might se
Was neuer suche another, as was he
To speke of strength, and therto hardinesse
But to his wiues tolde he his secre (nesse
Through which he slough him for wretched-

Sampson this noble & mighty champion
Without weapen, saue his handes twey
He slough and al to rente the lion
Towarde his wedding, walking by the wey
His false wife coulde him so please and pray
Til she his counsaile knewe, and she vntrewe
Vnto his foes, his counsaile gan bewray
And him forsoke, and tooke another newe

An hundred fores tooke Sampson for yre
And al her tailes he togither bonde
And set the fores tailes al on fire
For he in euery taile hath put a bronde
And thei brent all the cornes in that londe
And her oliues, and her vines eke
A thousãd men eke he slough with his honde
And had no weapen, but an asse cheke.

Whan thei were slaine, so thristed him ♁ he
Was wel nie lorne, for which he gan to prey
That God wold of his paine, haue some pite
And sende him drinke, or els mote he dey
And of this asse cheke, that was so drey
Out of a wange toothe, sprange anon a well
Of whiche he dronke inough, shortly to sey
Thus halpe him God, as Judicum can tell.

By very force, at Gasa on a night
Maugre the Philistens of that cite
The gates of the toune, he hath vp plight
And on his backe, icaried hem hath he
High on an hill, where as men might hem se
O noble mighty Sampson, lefe and dere
Had thou not tolde to women thy secre
In al this worlde ne had be thy pere.

This Sãpson neither cider drãke ne wine
Ne on his heed came rasour none ne shere
By precepte of the messangere diuine
For all his strength in his heeres were
And fully twenty yere by yere
Of Israel, he had the gouernaunce
But after soon shall he wepe many a tere
For women shal bring him to mischaunce

Unto his lemman Dalida he tolde
That in his heeres, al his strength lay
And falsely to his foes she him solde
And sleping in her barme vpon a day
She made to clippe or shere his heres away
And made his fomen al his craft espien
And whan that thei him fonde in suche aray
They bounde him faste, and put out his eyen

But er his heeres were clipped or ishaue
There was no bonde that might him binde
But nowe is he put in prison in a caue
Where as thei made him at ♁ querne grinde
O noble Sampson, strongest of mankinde
O whilom iudge in glory and richesse
Now maist thou wepe ♁ thine eyen blinde

Sith ẏ art from wele fal in to wretchednesse

The ende of this caitife was, as I shal sey
His fomen made a feest vpon a daie
And made him, as their fole before hem pley
And this was in a temple of great araie
But at the last he made a foule a fraie
For he two pillers shoke, and made hem fall
And doune fel the temple al, and there it laie
And sloughe himself, and eke his fomen all

This is to say, the princes euerichone
And eke thre thousād bodies were ther slain
With falling of the great temple of stone
Of Sampson wol I no more sain
Beth ware by this ensample olde and plain
That no men tel her counsaile to her wiues
Of such thing as thei would haue secret fain
If that it touche her limmes or her liues.

Of Hercules.

Of Hercules the soueraine conqueroure
Singen his werkes, laude, and hie renoun
For in his time of strength he bare the floure
He slough and rafte the skin of the lion
And of the Centaurs, laide the boste adoun
He Harpias slewe, the cruel birdes fell
He the golden appels rafte fro the dragon
He drewe out Cerberus the hounde of hell.

He slewe the cruel tiraunt Busirus
He made his horse to frete him fleshe & bone
He sloughe the very serpent venemous
Of Achelous two hornes, brake he that one
And he slewe Cacus, in a caue of stone
He sloughe the giaunt Antacus the stronge
He sloughe the grisly Bore, and that anon
And bare his heed vpon his spere longe.

Was neuer wight, sith the world began
That sloughe so many monsters, as did he
Through the wide world, his name ran
What for his strength and his bounte
And euery realme went he for to se
He was so strong, ẏ no man might him let
And at bothe worldes endes, he Trophe
In stede of boundes, of brasse a pillour set.

A lemman had this noble champion
That hight Deianire, as fresh as Maye
And as clerkes make mencion
She hath him sent a shirt fresh and gaie
Alas this shirte, alas and well awaie
Enuonemed was subtelly with all
That er he had weared it halfe a daie
It made his fleshe all fro his bones fall.

But nathelesse, some clerkes her excusen
By one that hight Nessus, that it maked
Be as be may, I wol her not accusen
But on his body, the shirte he ware al naked
Til the fleashe was with the venim slaked
And when he sawe none other remedie
In hote coles, he hath himselfe iraked
For with no venim dained he to die.

Thus sterfe this worthy mighty Hercules
Lo, who may trust in fortune any throwe
For him that foloweth al the worlde of pres
Or he be ware, is ofte laide ful lowe
Ful wise is he, that him selfe can knowe
Beware, for when that fortune liste to glose
Than waiteth she, her man doune to throwe
By suche a way, as he would leste suppose.

Nabuchodonosor.

The mighty trone, the precious tresore
The glorious septer, and royal maieste
That hath the king Nabuchodonosore
With tonge vnneth may discriued be
He twise wanne Hierusalem, that cite
The vessel of the temple he with him lad
At Babilon was his soueraine se
In whiche his glory and his delite he had.

Of Hierusalem, he did do gelde anone
The fayrest children of the blode royall
And make eche of hem to ben his thrall
Amonge all other Daniell was one
That was the wisest of euerichone
For he the dremes of the king expouned
Where as in Caldee clerkes were there none
That wist to what fine his dreme souned

This proude king let make a statu of golde
Sixty cubites longe, and seuen in brede
To whiche ymage, bothe yonge and olde
Commaunded he loute, and haue in drede
Or in a forneis, ful of flames rede
He should be deed, that would not obey
But neuer would assent to that dede
Daniell, ne his yong felowes twey

This king of kinges, proude an elate
Wende God, that sitteth in maieste
Ne might him nat birefe of his estate
But sodainly he loste his dignite
And like a beest, him semed for to be
And ete hey as an oxe, and laye therout
In rain, with wilde beestes walked he
Til a certain time was come about

And like an Egles fethers were his heeres

And

And his neiles like birdes clawes were
God releued him at certain yeres
And yaue him wit, & than with many a tere
He thonked God, and all his life in fere
Was he, to doe amisse, or more trespace
And ere that he laied was on his bere
He knew that God was full of might & grace

Balthaser.

His sonne, whiche & hight Balthasare
That helde & reign after his faders daie
He by his fader could not beware
For proude he was of harte, and of arraie
And eke an ydolaster was he aie
His high estate, assured him in pride
But fortune cast him doun, and there he laie
And sodainly his reigne gan deuide.

A feast he made vnto his lordes all
Upon a time, he made him blith be
And than his officers gan he call
Goth bring forth the vessels (q he)
Whiche that my father, in his prosperite
Out of the temple of Hierusalem birast
And to our Goddes thonken we
Of honour, that our elders with vs last.

His wife, his lordes, and his concubines
Ate dronken, whiles her appetites last
Out of this noble vessels, sondrie wines
And on a wall, this king his yen cast
And sawe an hond armelesse, that wrote fast
For feare of whiche he quoke, and sighed sore
This hond that Balthasar made so sore agast
Wrote (Mane techel phares) and no more.

In all that londe, Magicien was ther non
That coud expoune what this letter ment
But Daniel expouned it anon
And saied, king, God thy father sent
Glorie and honour, reign, treasour, and rent
And he was proude, & nothing God he drad
And therefore great wrath God vpō him sent
And him birast the reigne that he had

He was out cast of mannes companie
With Asses was his habitacion
And eate haie as a beast, in weate and drie
Till that he knewe, by grace and by reason
That God of heauen hath dominacion
Ouer euery reigne, and euery creature
And than had God of him compassion
And him restored his reigne and his figure

Eke thou that art his sonne, art proud also
And knowest all these thinges priuely
And art rebell to God, and his so
Thou dranke eke of his vessells boldly
Thy wife eke, and thy wenches sinfully
Dronke of the same vessells sondrie winis
And heried false Goddes curiedly
Therefore to thee shapen great paines.

This hond was sent fro God, & on the wal
Wrote (Mane techel phares) trust me
Thy reigne is doen, thou wotest not all
Deuided is thy realme, and it shall be
To Medes and to Perciens (q he)
And that same night, the king was slawe
And Darius occupied his dignite
Though he therto had neither right ne lawe.

Lordinges, here ensample mowe ye take
How that in lordship is no sikernesse
For whan that fortune woll a man forsake
She beareth awaie his reigne, & his richesse
And eke his frendes, bothe more and lesse
And what man hath frēds, through fortune
Mishap woll make him enemies as I gesse
This prouerbe is full soth, and ful commune

Zenobia.

Zenobia of Palmerie Quene
(As writeth Perciens of her noblesse)
So worthy was in armes, and so kene
That no wight passed her in hardinesse
Ne in linage, ne in none other gentilnesse
Of kinges blood of Perce she is discended
I saie that she had not moste fairenesse
But of her shap she might not be amended

From her childhode I finde that she fled
Office of a woman, and to wood she went
And many a wilde Hartes blood she shed
With arrowes broad, that she to hem sent
She was so swift, that she anon hem hent
And whan that she was elder, she would kill
Lions, Libardes, and Beeres all to rent
And in her armes welde hem at her will.

She durst wilde beastes dennes seke
And renne in the mountaines all the night
And slepe vnder a buske, and she could eke
Wrastell by very force, and by very might
With any yong man, were he neuer so wight
There might nothing in her armes stonde
She kept her maidenhed from euery wight
To no man dained she to be bounde.

But at last, her frendes hath her maried
To Odenat, a Prince of that countre

All were it so, that she hem long taried
And ye shall vnderstonde, how that he
Had sothe fantasies as had she
But natheless, whan thei were knit in fere
Thei liued in ioye and in felicite
Fo? eche of hem had other lefe and dere.

Saue one thing, she nolde neuer assent
By no waie, that he should by her lie
But ones, fo? it was her plain entent
To haue a child, the wo?lde to multiplie
And also sone as she might aspie
That she was not with childe with that dede
Than would she suffer him to do his fantasie
Eftsones, and not but ones out of d?ede.

And if she were with child at that cast
Nomo?e should he plaie that game
Till fully fourtie daies were past
Than would she ones suffer him thesame
All were this Odenat wilde o? tame
He gate no mo?e of her, fo? thus she saied
It was to wiues lecherie and shame
In other case, if men with hem plaied.

Two sonnes by this Odenat had she
The whiche she kept in vertue and lettrure
But now vnto our tale tourne we
I saie that so wo?shipfull a creature
And wise therwith, and large with measure
So penible in warre, and curteis eke
Ne mo?e labour might in warre endure
Was non, though al this wo?ld mē wold seke

Her riche araie, ne might not be told
As well in vessell as in her clothing
She was all cladde in pierrie and in gold
And eke she left not fo? none hunting
To haue of sond?ie tongues folke knowing
Whan that she leiser had fo? to entende
To learne bookes was all her liking
How she in vertue her life might dispende.

And sho?tly of this sto?ie fo? to treate
As doughtie was her husbonde as she
So that thei conquered many reignes great
In the O?ient, with many a faire cite
Apperteinaunt vnto the Maieste
Of Rome, and with strength helde them fast
Ne neuer might her foe men doe her flee
All the while that Odenates daies last.

Her battailes, who so liste hem fo? to rede
Again Sapo? the king, and other mo
And how all this proces fill in dede
Why she cōquered, & what title she had therto
And after of her mischief and of her wo
How that she was beleged, and itake
Let him to my maister Petrarke go
That writeth inough of this, I vndertake.

Whan Odenat was dedde, she mightily
The realmes held, and with her owne honde
Ayenst her foes she fought truely
That ther was no prince ne king, in al ỹ lond
But were glad, if thei that grace fonde
That she ne should vpon his londe warrey
With her thei made aliaunce by bonde
To be in peace, and let hem ride and pley.

The Emperour of Rome Claudius
Ne him before, the Romain Galien
Ne durst neuer be so co?agious
Ne non Armen, ne non Egipcien
Ne Surrien, ne none Arabien
Within the field, that durst with her fight
Lest that she would hē with her hondes sleen
O? with her meine, put hem to flight.

In kinges habite went her sonnes two
As the heires of her realmes all
And Hermanno and Titamallo
Her names were, as Perciens hem call
But aie fo?tune, hath in her honie gall
This mightie Quene, maie no while endure
Fo?tune out of her reigne made her to fall
To wretchednesse, and to misauenture.

Aurelian, whan that the gouernaunce
Of Rome came in his hondes twey
He shope vpon this quene to doe vengeaunce
And with his legions, he toke his wey
Toward Zenobia, and sho?tly fo? to saie
He made her flie, and at last her hent
And fettered her, and eke her child?en twaie
And wan the lond, & home to Rome he went.

Emong other thinges that he wan
her chare, that of gold was wrought & pierre
This greate Romaine, this Aurelian
Hath with him lad, that fo? men should se
Before his triumphe walked she
With golden chaines on her necke honging
Crouned she was, as after her degre
And full of pierre charged her clothing.

Alas fo?tune, she that whilom was
D?edefull to kinges, and to Emperoures
Now gaureth all the people on her, alas
And she that helmed was in starke stoures

And

And wan by force tounes strong, and toures
Shall on her hedde now were autremite
And she that bare the scepter full of floures
Shall beare a distaffe, her coste forto quite.

Nero.

Although that Nero were as vicious
As any fende, that lieth full low adoun
Yet he, as telleth vs Suetonius
All this worlde had in subiecciouu
Bothe East and West, and Septentrion
Of Rubies, Saphers, and of Perles white
Were all his clothes broudred vp and doun
For he in gemmes greatly gan delite.

More delicate, more pompous of araie
More proude, was neuer Emperour, than he
That ilke clothe that he had wearedo daie
After that time, he nolde it neuer se
Nettes of gold threde had he great plente
To fisshe in Tiber, whan him list to plaie
His lustes were as lawe, in his degre
For fortune as his frende would him obaie.

He Rome brent for his delicacie
The Senatours he slue vpon a daie
To heare how her wiues would wepe & crie
And slowe his brother, and by his sister laie
His mother made he in a pitous araie
For he her wombe let slitte, to beholde
Where he conceiued was, so welawaie
That he so little of his mother tolde.

No teares out of his yen, for that sight
Ne came, but saied, a faire woman was she
Greate wonder is, that he coud or might
Be Domitian, of her dedde beaute
The wine to bring him commaunded he
And dranke anon, non other wo he made
Whan might is ioigned vnto cruelte
Alas, to depe will the venime wade

In youth a maister had this Emperour
To teache him lettrure, and curtesie
For of moralite he was the floure
And in his time, but if his bookes lie
And whiles his maister had of him maistrie
He made him so conning and so souple
That long time it was or tirannie
Or any vice, durst in him vncouple.

Seneck his maister was, of which I deuise
Bicause Nero had of him soche drede
For he for his vices would him chastise
Discretly as by worde, and not by dede
Sir he would saie, an Emperour moste nede
Be vertuous, and hate tiranne
For whiche he made him in a bathe to blede
On bothe his armes, till he must die.

This Nero had eke of a customaunce
In youth, ayenst his maister to rise
Which afterward, him thought greate grevaunce
Bicause he oft would him chastise
Therfore he made him die in this wise
To chose in a bathe to die in this manere
Rather than to haue an other turmentise
And thus hath Nero slain his maister dere

Now fell it so, that fortune liste no longer
The high pride of Nero to cherishe
For tho he were strong, yet was she stronger
Shethought thus, by God I am to nice
To set a man, that is fulfilled of vice
In hie degre, and an Emperour him call
By God out of his seate I will him trice
Whan he least weneth, sonest shall he fall.

The people rose vpon him on a night
For his defaute, and whan he it aspied
Out of his dores anon he hath him dight
Alone, and there he wende haue been alied
He knocked fast, and aie the more he cried
The faster shette thei the doores all
Tho wist he well, he had himself begiled
And went his waie, no lenger durst he call.

The people cried and rombled vp and doun
That with his eares he heard how thei saied
Where is this falle tiraunt, this Neroun
For feare full nere out of his wit he braied
And to his Goddes, right pitously he praied
For socoure, but it might not betide
For drede of this, him thought that he deide
And ran into a gardein, him to hide.

And in this gardaine, found he chorles twey
Sitting by a fire greate and redde
And to the chorles two he gan to prey
To slea him, and to girde of his hedde
That to his body, whan he were dedde
Were no dispite doen, for his desfame
Himself he slough, he could no better redde
Of whiche fortune lough and had game.

Holofernes.

Was neuer capitain vnder a king
That reignes mo, put in subiecciou
Ne stronger was in field, of all thing
As in his time, ne greater of renoun

No more pompous in high presumpcioun
Than Holoferne, whiche fortune aie kisse
And so licourously lad him vp and doun
Till that he dedde was er that he wiste.

Not onely that this worlde had of him awe
For leling of richesse and liberte
But he made euery man renie his lawe
Nabuchodonosor was lorde, saied he
None other God should honoured be
Ayenst his hest, there dare no wight trespace
Saue in Bethulia, a strong cite
Where Eliachem was priest of that place.

But take kepe of the death of Holoferne
Amid his hoste, he dronke laie all night
Within his tent, large as is a berne
And yet for all his pompe, and all his might
Judith, a woman, as he laie vpright
Sleping, his hedde of smote, and fro his tent
Full priuely she stale, from euery wight
And with his hedde, vnto her toun she went.

Antiochus.

What nedeth it of king Antiochus
To tell his high and roiall maieste?
His greate pride, his werke benemus
For soche an other man nas neuer as he
Redeth what that he was in Machabe
And redeth the proude wordes that he saied
And why he fill from his prosperite
And in an hill, how wretchedly he died.

Fortune him had enhaunsed so in pride
That verily he wende he might attain
Unto the sterres, vpon euery side
And in a balaunce, to wey eche mountain
And all the floudes of the se restrain
And Goddes people had he moste in hate
Hem would he slea, in turment and in pain
Wening that God ne might his pride abate

And for that Nichanore and Timothe
By Jewes were benquished mightily
Unto the Jewes soche an hate had he
That he bad greithe his chare full hastely
And swore and saied, full dispitously
Unto Hierusalem he would eftsone
To wreke his ire on it full cruelly
But of his purpose was he let full sone.

God for his menace him sore smote
With inuisible wounde, aie incurable
That in his guttes carfe so and bote
That his paines was importable
And certainly the wreche was reasonable
For many a mannes guttes did he pain
But frō his purpose, cursed and dampnable
For all his smert, he nolde him not restrain.

But bade anon, apraile his hoste
And sodainly, or he than was ware
God daunted all his pride, and all his boste
For he so sore fell out of his chare
That all his limmes and his skin to tare
So that he ne might go ne ride
But in a chaire, men about him bare
All forbruised bothe backe and side.

The wreche of God him smote so cruelly
That in his body wicked wormes crept
And therwithall he stanke so horribly
That none of all his meine, that him kept
Whether that he woke or els slept
Ne might not of him the stinke endure
And in his mischief he wailed and eke wept
And knewe God, Lorde of euery creature

To all his hoste, and to himself also
Full lothsome was the stinke of his caraine
No man might him beare to ne fro
And in his stinke, and in his horrible pain
He sterfe full wretchedly on a mountain
Thus hath this robbour, and this homicide
That many a man made to wepe and plain
Soche guerdon, as belongeth to pride.

Alexander.

The storie of Alexander is so commune
That euery wight, ỹ hath discrecioun
Hath hardlom what or al, of his fortun
This wide worlde, as in concluſioun
He wan by strength, and for his renoun
Thei were glad for peace vnto him sende
The pride of man, and boste he laied adoun
Where so he came, vnto the worldes ende.

Comparison might yet neuer be maked
Betwixt him, and an other conquerour
For al this worlde, for dred of him hath quaked
He was of knighthode, and of fredome floure
Fortune him made the heire of high honour
Saue wine & womē, nothing might aswage
His high entent in armes and labour
So was he full of louing corage.

What price wer it to him, though I you told
Of Darius, and of a hundred thousande mo
Of princes, Erles, and knightes bold
Whiche he conquered, and brought to wo

I saie as ferre as a man maie ride or go
the world was his, what shuld I more deuise
For though I wrote and told you euer mo
Of his knighthode, it might not suffice.

Twelue yere he reigned, as I rede i Machabe
Philippes soonne of Macedone he was
That first was king of Grece, that countre
O worthy gentill Alexander, alas
That euer should thee fall soche a caas
Enpoisonned of thy folke thou were
Thy lice, fortune hath tourned into an ace
And yet for thee ne wept she neuer a tere.

who shall yeue men teres to complain
The death of gentilnesse, and of fraunchise
That all the worlde welded in his demain
And yet him thought it might not suffice
So full was his corage of high empryse
Alas, who shall me helpe to endite
False fortune, and poison to dispise:
The whiche of all this wo I wite.

Julius Cesar.

By wisedome, manhode, and high labour
From humble bed to roiall Maieste
up rose he, Julius the Conquerour
That all the Occident, by londe and see
wan by strength of honde, or els by trete
And vnto Rome made him tributarie
And sith of Rome, Emperour was he
Till that fortune were his aduersarie

O mightie Cesar, that in Thessaly
Ayenst Pompei, father thine in lawe
That of the Orient had the chiualrie
As ferre as that the daie beginneth to dawe
Thē through knighthode hast take and slawe
Saue fewe folke, that with Pompeius fled
Through which ỹ puttest al the orīet in awe
Thanke fortune, that so well thee sped.

But now a little while I woll bewaile
This Pompei, this noble gouernour
Of Rome, whiche that fled at this battaile
I saie one of his men, a falsе traitour
His hedde of smote, to winne him fauour
Of Julius, and to him the hedde brought
Alas Pompei, of the Orient conquerour
That fortune vnto soch a fine thee wrought.

To Rome again repaireth Julius
with his triumphe lauriate full hie
But on a time Brutus Callius
That euer had of his hie estate enuie
Full priuelie had made conspiracie
Ayenst this Julius, in subtell wise
And cast the place, in whiche he should die
With bodkins, as I shall you deuise.

This Julius vnto the Capitoll went
Upon a daie, as he was wont to gone
And in the Capitoll, anon him hent
This falsе Brutus, and his other sone
And sticked him with bodkins anone
With many a wound, & thus thei let him lie
But neuer grutched he at no stroke but one
Or els at twoo, but if his storie lie.

So manly was this Julius of harte
And so well loued estately honeste
That tho his dedly woundes so sore smarte
His mantell ouer his hippes caste he
For no man should se his priuite
And as he laie in dying on a traunce
And wiste verily that die should he
Of honestie yet had he remembraunce

Lucan to thee this storie I recommende
And to Sueton, and Valerie also
That of this storie writen worde and ende
How that these conquerours two
Fortune was first a frende, and sithe a foe
No man trust vpon her fauour long
But haue her in awaite for euermo
Witnesse on all the conquerours strong

Cresus.

The riche Cresus, whilom king of Lide
Of which Cresus, Cirus sore him dread
yet was he caught amid all his pride
And to brenne, men to the fire him lad
But soche a rain doun frō the firmamēt had
That queint the fire, and made him to scape
But to beware yet no grace he had
Till fortune on the galowes made him gape

Whan he escaped was, he could not stint
For to begin a newe araie again
He wende well, for that fortune him sent
Soche hap, that he escaped through therain
That of his foes he might not be slain
And eke a sweuen vpon a night he met
Of whiche he was so proude, and eke so fain
That in vengeaunce he all his harte set.

Upon a tree he was, as him thought
Ther Jupiter him wisshe, both back and side
And Phebus eke a faire towell him brought
To drie him with, & therwith were his pride
And to his doughter that stode him beside

Which that he knewe in hie sentence habound
He bad her tell what it signified
And she his dreame right thus did expound.

The tree (q she) the galous is to meane
And Jupiter betokeneth Snowe and rain
And Phebus, with his towell so cleane
Betokeneth the Sunne beames, soth to sain
Thou shalt honged be, father certain
Rain shall thee washe, & sunne shall thee drie
Thus she warned him full plat & full plain
His doughter, that called was Phanie.

And honged was Cresus the proude king
His roiall throne might him not auaile
Tragedie is none other maner thing
Ne can in singing crie ne bewaile
But for that fortune aldaie will assaile
With vnware strok, ỹ reignes ỹ been proude
For whã men trusteth her, than wol she faile
And couer her bright face with a cloude.

Peter of Spain.

O Noble, o worthy Petro, glorie of Spain
Whom fortune held so high in Maiestie
Well ought men thy pitous death complain
Out of thy londe, thy brother made thee flie
And after at a siege by subtelte
Thou wer betraied, and ladde vnto his tent
Where as he with his owne honde slue thee
Succeding in thy reigne and in thy rent.

The felde of snowe, w thegle of black therin
Caught w the limrod, coloured as the glede
He brewe his cursednesse, and all this sinne
The wicked nest was werker of this dede
Not Charles, Oliuer, that tok aie hede
Of trouth and honour, but of Armorike
Genillion Oliuer, corrupt for mede
Brought this worthie king in soche a brike.

Petro king of Cipre.

O worthy Petro, king of Cipre also
That Alisandrie wan by high maistrie
Full many an Heathen wroughtest thou wo
Of whiche thine owne lieges had enuie
And for nothing, but for thy chiualrie
Thei in thy bed han slain thee by the morow
Thus can fortune her whele gouern and gie.
And out of ioye bring men to sorowe

Barnabo Vicounte.

Of Millan greate Barnabo Vicounte
God of delite, & scourge of Lumbardie
Why should I not thine infortune accounte
Sens in estate thou clomben were so hie
Thy brothers sõne, that was thy double alie
For he thy neuewe was, and sonne in lawe
Within his prison made thee to die
But why ne how not I, that thou wer slawe

Hugeline of Pise.

Of the erle Hugeline of Pise the lãgoure
There maie no tong tell for pite
But little out of Pise stont a toure
In whiche toure in prison put was he
And with him been his little children three
The eldest scarsly fiue yere of age
Alas fortune, it was a greate cruelte
Soche birdes for to put in soche a cage.

Dampned was he to die in that prison
For Roger, whiche that bishop was of Pise
Had on him made a false suggestion
Through which the people gan vpõ him rise
And put him in prison, in soche a wise
As ye haue heard, and meat and drinke he had
So small, that vnneth it maie suffise
And therwithall it was full poore and bad.

And on a daie befell, that in that houre
Whan ỹ his meate wont was to be brought
The geilour shette the doores of the toure
He heard it well, but he spake right nought
And in his harte anon there fill a thought
That thei for hunger would doe him dien
Alas (q he) alas that I was wrought
Therewith the teares fill fro his yen.

His yong sonne, that thre yere was of age
Unto him said, father father, why do ye wepe
Whan will the geilour bring our potage
Is there no morsell bread that ye doe kepe
I am so hungrie, that I maie not slepe
Now would God that I might slepe euer
Than should not hunger in my wombe crepe
There nis nothing but bread ỹ me wer leuer.

Thus daie by daie, this child began to crie
Till in his fathers arme adoune it laie
And saie, farwell father I mote die
And kist his father, and deide the same daie
And whan the wofull father did it sey
For wo, his armes two he gan to bite
And saied alas, fortune and welawaie
Thy false whele, my wo all maie it wete.

His children wend, that it for hunger was
That he his armes gnewe, and not for wo
And saied: father, doe not so (alas)

But

But rather eate the flesh vpon vs two
Our fleshe thou yaue vs, take our fleshe vs fro
And eate inough, right thus thei to him said
And after that within a day or two
Thei laid hem in his lappe adoun, and deide

Thus ended is this mighty erle of Pise
Him selfe dispeired eke, for hunger starfe
From high estate fortune away him carfe
Of this Tragedy, it ought inough suffise
Who so wol here it in a longer wise
Redeth the great poete of Itaile
That hight Dante, for he can it all deuise
Fro point to point, not a worde wol he faile.

¶ Here endeth the Monkes tale.

¶ Here stinteth the knight the Monke of his tale, and here foloweth the prologue of the Nonnes Priest.

HO (q̃ the knight) good sir no more of this
That ye haue sayd, is right ynough iwis
And mokel more, for litell heuinesse
Is right inough to muche folke, I gesse
I saie for me, it is a great disease
Where as men haue be in welth and ease
To here of her sodaine fal, alas
And the contrary is ioye and solas
As when a man hath ben in pore estate
And climbeth vp, and wereth fortunate
And there abideth in prosperite
Suche thinges is gladsome, as thinketh me
And of suche thing were good for to tell.
Ye (q̃ our hoste) by saint Poules bell
Ye say right soth, this monke clappeth loude
He spake, how fortune couered with a cloude
I wote not what, and also of a Tragedy
Right nowe ye herde, and perdy no remedy
It is for to bewailen, ne complaine
That that is done, and als it is a paine
As ye haue saide, to here of heuinesse
Sir monke no more of this, so God you blesse
Your tale anoyeth all this company
Suche talking is not worth a butterfly
For therin is there no disport ne game
Therfore sir monke, dan Piers by your name
I pray you hertely, tell vs somwhat elles
For sikerly, nere clinking of your belles
That on your bridell honge on euery side
By heuen king, that for vs all dide
I should er this han fall doune for slepe
Al though the slough had ben neuer so depe
Than had your tale al be tolde in vaine
For certainly, as that these clerkes saine
Where as a man may haue none audience
Nought helpeth it to tell his sentence
And wel I wote the substaunce is in me
If any thing, shal well reported be
Sir, say somwhat of hunting I you pray
Nay (q̃ this monke) I haue no lust to play
Now let an other tel, as I haue tolde.
Thā spake our hoste w̃ rude speche & bolde
And saied: vnto the Nonnes priest anon
Come nere ẏ priest, come hither thou sir Jhon
Tel vs such a thing, as may our hertes glade
Be blithe, though thou ride vpon a iade
What though thy horse be both foule & lene
If he wol serue the, recke not a bene
Loke that thy herte be mery euer mo
Yes sir (q̃ he) yes host, so mote I go
But I be mery, iwis I wol be blamed
And right anon, his tale he hath atamed
And thus he saide, vnto vs euerichon
This swete preest, this goodly man sir Jhon

¶ Here endeth the Prologue of the Nonnes preest, and here foloweth his tale.

A Pore wedowe, somdele istept in age
Was whilom dwelling in a poore cotage
Beside a groue, stonding in a dale
This widowe, of which I tel you my tale
Sens the day that she was last a wife
In pacience, ledde a full simple life
For litell was her catell and her rent
By husbondry, of suche as God her sent
She fonde her self, & eke her doughters two
Thre large sowes had she, and no mo
Thre kine, and eke a shepe that hight Mall
Wel sooty was her boure, and eke her hall
In whiche she ete many a slender mele
Of poinant sauce, ne knewe she neuer a dele
Ne deinty morcell passed through her throte
Her diet was acordaunt to her cote
Replection ne made her neuer sike
A temperate diete was her phisike
And exercise, and hertes suffisaunce
The gout let her nothing for to daunce
Ne apoplexie shent nat her heed
No wine dranke she, white ne reed

Her borde was most serued w̄ white & blacke
Milke & broun breed, i which she fōde no lack
Seinde bakon, and somtime an eye or twey
For she was as it were a maner dey.
A yerde she had, enclosed al aboute
With stickes, and drie diched withoute
In whiche she had a cocke hight Chaūteclere
In al the lande, of crowing nas his pere
His voice was merier than the mery orgon
On masse daies, that in the churches gon
Wel sikerer was his crowing in his loge
Than is a clocke, or in an abbey an orloge
By nature he knew eche assencion
Of the equinoctial in the toun
For when degrees. xv. were assended
Than crew he, that it might not be amended
His come was redder than the fine corall
And battelled, as it had be a castell wall
His bill was blacke as any get it chone
Like asure were his legges and his tone
His nailes whiter than the lilly floure
And like the burned golde was his coloure,
This gentel cocke, had in gouernaunce
Seuen hennes, to done his plesaunce
Which were his susters and his paramours
And wonder like to him, as of colours
Of whiche the fayrest hewed in the throte
Was called faire damosell Pertelote
He fethered her a hundred times a day
And she him pleseth, al that euer she may
Curteis she was, discrete, and debonaire
And compenable, and bare her selfe so faire
Sens the time that she was seuenight olde
That trueliche, she hath the hert in holde
Of Chaunteclere, loking in euery lith
He loueth her so, that wel was him therwith
But suche a ioye it was to here him sing
Whan the bright sunne gan to spring
In swete acorde, my lefe is ferre in londe
For that time as I haue vnderstonde
Beestes and birdes coulde speke and singe
And it so fell, that in the dawninge
As Chaunteclere, among his wiues all
Sat on his perche, that was in the hall
And nexte him sat his faire Pertelote
This Chaūteclere gan to grone in his throte
As a man in his dreme is drenched sore
And whā that Pertelot thus herde him rore
She was agast, and said herte dere
What eyleth you to grone in this manere
Ye be a very sleper, fie for shame.
And he answerd thus, by God madame
I pray you, that ye take it not in grefe
By God I mette, I was in suche mischiefe
Right now, that yet mine hert is sore afright
Now God (q̄ he) my sweuen retche a right
And kepe my body out of foule prisoun
Me mette, that I romed vp and doun
Within our yerde, where I sawe a beest
Was like an houd, & would haue made areest
Upon my body, and would haue had me deed
His colour was betwixt yelow and reed
And tipped was his taile, and both his eeres
With black, vnlike the remenāt of his heeres
His snoute small, with glowing eyen twey
Yet for his loke, almost for feare I dey
This causeth me my groning doutlesse.
Away (q̄ she) fie for shame hertlesse
Alas (q̄ she) for by God aboue
Now haue ye loste my hert, and al my loue
I can not loue a cowarde by my faithe
For certes, what so any woman saithe
We all desire, if that it might be
To haue husbondes, hardy, wise, and fre
And secrete, and no nigarde, ne no fole
Ne him that is agast of euery tole
Ne none auantour, by that God aboue
How durst ye say for shame, vnto your loue
That any sweuen might make you a ferde?
Haue ye no mannes hert, and haue a berde?
Alas, and con ye be a ferde of sweuenis?
Nothing but vanite god wotte in sweuen is
Sweuens ben engendred of repleccions
And of fume, and of compleccions
When humours ben to habūdant in a wight
certes this dreme, which ye haue met to night
I tel you trouthe, ye may trust me
Cometh of superfluite, and reed colour parde
Whiche cause folke to drede in her dremes
Of arowes, and of fire with reed lemes
Of reed beestes, that woll hem bite
Of conteke, and of waspes great and lite
Right as the humour of melancolye
Causeth many a man in slepe to crye
For fere of great bulles, and beres blake
Or els that blacke diuels wol hem take
Of other humours coulde I tell also
That werke a man in slepe muche wo
But I wol passe, as lightly as I can.
Lo Caton, whiche that was so wise a man
Said he not thus, do no force of dremes
Now sir (q̄ she) when we flie fro the bemes
For goddes loue, as taketh some laxatiue
Up peril of my soule, and of my life
I counsaile you the best, I wol not lie
That bothe of colour, and of melancolye
Ye purge you, and for ye shul not tarie
Though in this toune, be none apotecarie
I shal my selfe two herbes teche you
That shall be for your heale, & for your prow
And

And in our yerde, tho herbes shall I finde
The whiche I haue of her properte by kinde
To purge you bineth, and eke aboue
For yet not this, for goddes owne loue
Ye be right coleribe of complection
Where the sunne is in his ascention
Ne finde you not replete of humours hote
For if ye do, I dare wel lay a grote
That ye shal haue a feuer terciane
Or elsan ague, that may be your bane
A day or two, ye shall haue digestiues
Of wormes, or ye take your laxatiues
Of laurel, centorie, and of fumetere
Or els of elder beries, that growe there
Of Catapuce, or of gaitres beris
Of herbe yue, growing in our yerde ỹ mery is
Plucke hem vp as thei growe, & eate hem in
Be mery husbonde, for your father kin
Dredeth no dreme, I can say no more
Madame (q̃ he) gramercy of your lore
But natheless, as touching dan Caton
That of wisdome hath so great renoun
Though he bade no dremes for to drede
By God, men may in olde bokes rede
Of many a man, more of auctorite
Than euer Caton was, so mote I the
That al the reuers saieth of his sentence
And haue wel founde by experience
That dremes ben significacions
As wel of ioye, as of tribulacions
That folke endure, in this life present
There nedeth to make of this none argumẽt
The very prefe sheweth it in dede
One of the greatest auctours that men rede
Saith thus, that whilom two felowes went
On pilgrimage, in ful good entent
And happed so, thei come in to a toun
Where as there was suche congregacion
Of people, and eke of straite herbigage
That thei ne founde, as muche as a cotage
In whiche thei bothe might iloged be
Wherfore thei mote of necessite
As for that night, departe company
And eche of hem goeth to his hostelry
And toke his lodging, as it would fall
That one of hem, was lodged in a stall
Farre in a yerde, with oxen of the plough
That other man was lodged wel inough
As was his auenture, or his fortune
That vs gouerneth all, as in comune
And so befel, longe or it were day
This man mette in his bedde, there as he lay
How that his felowe gan vpon him call
And said (alas) for in an ores stall
This night shal I be murdered, there I lie
Now helpe me dere brother or I die
In al haste, come to me (he said)
This man out of his slepe for feare abraid
But whan he was waked of his slepe
He turned him, and toke of this no kepe
Him thought his dreme was but a vanite
Thus twise in his slepe dremed he
And at thirde time, yet his felawe
Cam as him thought, & said I nowe am slawe
Beholde my bloudy woundes, depe and wide
Arise vp erly, in the morow tide
And at the west gate of the toun (q̃ he)
A carte ful of donge, there shalt thou se
In whiche my body is hide ful priuely
Do thou that carte areste boldely
My golde caused my deth, soth to saine
And told him euery point how he was slaine
With a ful petous face, pale of hewe
And trust wel his dreme he foũde right trewe
For on the morow, as sone as it was day
To his felowes inne, he toke the way
And when that he came to the ores stall
After his felowe, he began to call.
The hostelere answerde him anon
And said, sir your felowe is gon
As sone as it was day, he went out of ỹ toun
This man gan fal in suspection
Remembring of his dremes that he mette
And forth he goeth, no lenger would he lette
Vnto the west gate of the toune, and fonde
A donge carte, as it were to donge londe
That was araied in the same wise
As ye haue herde the deed man deuise
And with hardy herte he gan to crie
Vengeaunce and iustice of this felonie
My felowe murdred is this same night
And in this carte he lieth, gaping vpright
I cry out on the ministers (q̃ he)
That should kepe and rule this cite
Harowe alas, here lieth my felowe slaine
What should I more of this tale saine?
The people out start, & cast the cart to grounde
And in the middell of the donge thei founde
The deed man, that murdred was al newe.
O blisful God, that arte so good and trewe
Lo, howe thou bewrayest murdre alway
Murdre wol out, that se we day by day
Murdre is so wlatsome and abhominable
To God, that so iuste is and reasonable
That he ne wol it suffre healed to be
Though it abide a yere, two, or thre
Murdre wol out, this is my conclusioun
And right anon, the ministers of the toun
Haue hent the carter, and fast him pined
And eke the hostelere so fast engined

That thei beknew her wickednesse anone
And were honged by the neckebone
Here maie ye se that dremes ben to drede.
And certes, in the same lese I rede
Right in the next chapiter after this
I gabbe not, so haue I ioye and blis
Two men would haue passed ouer the se
For certaine causes, into a ferre countre
If the winde ne had be contrarie
That made hym in a cite to tarie
That stode ful mery vpon an hauen side
But on an day, ayenst an euen tide
The winde gan chaunge, & blewe as hem lest
Joly and glad, they went to rest
And cast hem ful erly for to saile
But herken, to one man fell a great meruaile
To one of hym in sleping as he lay
He met a wonders dreme, again the day
Him thought a man stode by his beddes side
And him commaunded, that he should abide
And said him thus, if thou to morow wende
Thou shalt be dreint, my tale is at an ende.
He woke, & tolde his felow what he mette
And praied him his voyage for to lette
As for that day, he prayd him for to abide
His felowe that laie by his beddes side
Gan for to laugh, and scorned him ful faste
No dreme (quod he) may so my herte agaste
That I woll let for to do my thinges
I set not a strawe for thy dreminges
For sweuens ben but vanites and iapes
Men meten al day of oules and of apes
And eke of many a mase ther withall
And dremen of thing that neuer was, ne shal
But sithe I se that thou wolt here abide
And thus slouthe wilfully thy tide
God wote it rueth me, and haue good day
And thus he toke his leue, and went his way
But er he had halfe his course isailed
I not why, ne what mischaunce it ayled
But casuelly the shippes botome to rent
And ship and men, vnder the water went
In sight of other shippes beside
That with hem sailed at the same tide
And therfore faire Pertelot so dere
By such ensamples olde, maist thou lere
That no man should be to recheleste
Of dremes, for I say the doutleste
That many a dreme ful sore is for to drede
Lo in the life of saint Kenelme we rede
That was Kenelphus sonne, the noble king
Of Mercurike, how Kenelm mette a thing
A litel er he were murdred on a day
His murder in his vision he say
His norice him expouned it euery dele
His sweuen, and badde him kepe him wele
For traylon, but he was but seuen yere olde
And therfore litell tale he therof tolde
Of any dreme, so holy was his herte
By God, I had rather than my sherte
That ye haue herde his legende, as haue I
Dame Pertelot, I say to you truely
Macrobius, that writeth the auision
In Affrike, of the worthy Scipion
Affirmeth dremes, and saieth that thei been
Warning of thinges, that we after seen
And ferthermore I pray you loketh well
In the olde Testament, of Daniell
Yf he helde dremes for vanite
Rede eke of Joseph, and there shal ye se
Wonders ben somtime, but I say nat all
Warning of thinges, that after shall fall.
Lo of Egipt the king, that hight Pharao
His baker, and his butteler also
Wheder they felt none effecte in dremes:
Who so wol seke actes of sondrie remes:
May rede of dremes a wonder thing
Lo Cresus which was of Lide king
Mette he not that he, satte vpon a tre
Which signified he should honged be
Lo Adromeda, that was Hectors wife
That day that Hector should lese his life
She dremed in the same night beforne
How the life of Hector should be lorne
Yf that day he went vnto bataile
She warned him, but it might not auaile
He went for to fight neuer the lesse
But he was slaine anone of Achilles
But that tale is to long to tell
And eke it is nigh day I may nat dwell
Shortely I say, as for conclusion
That I shall haue of this auision
Adversite: and I say farthermore
That I ne tell of laxatiues no store
For they ben venemous, I wote it wele
I hem defie, I loue hem neuer a dele
But let vs speke of mirthe, & stinte all this
Madame Pertelot, so haue I blis
Of one thing God hath me sent large grace
For when I se the beautie of your face
Ye ben so scarlet reed about your eyen
It maketh al my drede for to dien
For also siker, as In principio
Mulier est hominis confusio.
Madame, the sentence of this latin is
Woman is mannes ioye and his blis
For when I fele on night your soft side
Al be it that I may not on you ride
For that our perche is made so narowe alas
I am so full of ioye and of solas

That

That I defie bothe sweuen and dreme
And with ỹ word he flewe doun fro the beme
For it was day, and eke the hennes all
And with a chucke, he gan him for to call
For he had founde a corne lay in the yarde
Royall ye was, and no more a ferde
He fedred Pertelot twenty time
And tradde her eke as ofte, er it was prime
He loketh as it were a grimme lioun
And on his toes he romed vp and doun
Him deined not to set his fete to the grounde
He chucked, when he had a corne ifounde
And to him than ran his wiues all
As royall as a prince in his hall
Leaue I this Chaunteclere, in his pasture
And after woll I tel of his aduenture.
Whan ỹ moneth in whiche ỹ world began
That hight Marche, ỹ God first made man
was complete, and passed were also
Sith Marche began, twenty daies and two
Befill that Chaunteclere, in al his pride
His seuen wiues walking him beside
Cast vp his eien to the bright sunne
That in the signe of Taurus was irunne
Fourty degrees and one, and somwhat more
He knew by kinde, and by none other lore
That it was prime, & crew wt a blisful steuen
The sunne he saide is clombe vp to heuen
Fourty degrees & one, & somwhat more i wis
Madame Pertelot, my worldes blisse
Herken how this blisful birdes singe
And se the fresshe floures howe thei springe
Full is min hert of reuel, and solas
But sodainly him fel a sorowfull caas
For euer the latter ende of ioye is wo
God wote, worldely ioye is soone ago
And if a rethore coud faire endite
He in a cronicle might sauely write
As for a soueraine notabilite
Nowe euery wise man herken to me
This storye is al so true I vndertake
As is the boke of Launcelot du lake
That women holden in ful great reuerence
Now wol I turne ayen to my sentence.
A col fox (ful of sleight and iniquitie)
That in the graue had wonned yeres thre
By high imagination a forne caste
The same night, through the hedge braste
Into the yerde, there Chaunteclere the faire
Was wont and eke his wiues to repaire
And in a bedde of wortes still he lay
Til it was passed vndren of the day
Waiting his time, on Chaunteclere to fall
As gladly done these homicides all
That in a waite lie to murdre men

O false murdrer, ruching in thy den
O newe Scariot, and newe Ganilion
False dissimuler, O grete Sinon
That broughtest Troy vtterly to sorowe
O Chaunteclere, acursed be the morowe
That thou in thy yerde flewe from the bemes
Thou were ful well warned by thy dremes
That ilke day was perillous to the
But what ỹ God afore wote, muste nedes be
After the opinion of certaine clerkes
Witnesse of him, that any clerke is
That in scole is great altercacion
In this mater, and great disputacion
And hath ben, of an hundred thousande men
But I ne can nat boulte it to the bren
As can the holy doctour saint Austin
Or Boece, or the bishop Bradwardin
Whether that goddes worthy foreweting
Straineth me nedely to do a thing
(Nedely clepe I simple necessite)
Or if the fre choice be graunted me
To do the same thing, or do it nought
Though God forewote it, or it was wrought
Or of his weting straineth neuer a dele
But by necessite condicionele
I wol not haue to done of suche matere
My tale is of a cocke, as ye shal here
That toke his counsaile of his wife wt sorowe
To walke in the yerde vpon the morowe
That he had met the dreme, as I you tolde
Womens counsailes ben oft ful colde
Womens counsaile brought vs first to wo
And made Adam fro paradise to go
There as he was ful mery, and well at ease
But for I not, whom I might displease
If I counsaile of wemen would blame
Passe ouer, I said it in my game (tere
Redeth authors, wher thei trete of such mat-
And what thei say of women, ye mowe here
These ben the Cockes wordes, and not mine
I can of women no harme deuine.
Faire in the sonde, to bathe her merely
Lieth Pertelot, and al her sustres by
Ayenst the sunne, and Chaunteclere so fre
Songe merier, than the Marmaide in the se
For Phisiologus, saieth vtterly
How that they singen wel and merely
And so befill as he caste his eye
Among the wortes on a butterflie
He was ware of the fox that lai ful lowe
Nothing than list him for to crowe
But cried cocke cocke, and vp he sterte
As one that was affraide in his herte
For naturally beestes desireth to flie
Fro her contrarie, if he may it se

Tho he neuer erst had seen it with his eye.
This Chaunteclere, when he gan him espie
He would haue fledde, but the foxe anone
Said gentel sir, alas: what wol ye done?
Be ye affraide of me, that am your frende?
Nowe certes: I were worse than a fende
Yf I to you would harme, or villanny
I am not come your counsaile to espie
But trewely the cause of my comminge
Was onely to here howe ye singe
For sothly ye haue as mery a steuen
As any angel hath, that is in heuen
Therwith ye haue of musike more feling
Than had Boece, or any that can sing
My lorde your father, God his soule blesse
And eke your mother of her gentelnesse
Haue in my house ben, to my great ease
And certes sir, ful faine would I you please.
But for men speken of singing, I wol sey
So mote I broken wel mine eyen twey
Saue you, ne herde I neuer man so singe
As did your father in the morninge
Certes it was of herte, al that he song
And for to make his voice more strong
He would so paine him, ẏ with both his eyen
He must winke, so loude he must crien
And stonden on his tiptoes ther withall
And stretche forth his necke, longe and small
And eke he was of suche discrecion
That there was no man in no region
That him in songe or wisdome might passe
I haue wel redde dan Burnel the asse
Among his verses, how ẏ there was a Cocke
For that a preestes sonne yaue him a knocke
Upon his legges, while he was yonge & nice
He made him for to lese his benefice
But certaine there is no comparison
Betwixt the wisdom and discrecion
Of your father, and of his subtilte
Nowe singeth sir, for saint charite
Let se, can ye your father counterfete.
This Chaũteclere his winges gan to bete
As a man that could not his treson aspie
So was he rauished with his flaterie
Alas ye lordes, many a false flaterour
Is in your courte, & many a false lesingour
That please you wel more, by my faith
Than he that sothfastnesse vnto you saith
Redeth Ecclesiast of flaterie
Beware ye lordes of her trecherie.
This Chaũteclere stode hie vpon his toos
Stretching his necke, & helde his eyen cloos
And gan to crowe loude for the nones
And dan Russel the foxe starte vp at ones
And by the gorget hent Chaunteclere
And on his backe, towarde ẏ woode him bere
For yet was there no man that him sued
O destine, that maiste not be eschued
Alas that Chaunteclere flewe fro the bemes
Alas his wife rought not of dremes
And on a friday fill al this mischaunce
O Venus that art goddesse of pleasaunce
Sithnes ẏ thy seruaũt was this chaũteclere
And in thy seruice did al his powere
More for delite, than the worlde to multiplie
Why woldest ẏ suffre him on thy day to die?
O Gaulfride, dere maister soueraine
That whã ẏ worthy kig Richard was slaine
With shot, complainedest his deth so sore
Why ne had I now thy science and thy lore
The friday for to chide, as did ye
For on a friday, shortly slaine was he
Than wold I shew you how ẏ I coud plaine
For Chauntecleres drede, and for his paine.
Certes such cry, ne lamentacion
Nas neuer of ladies made, whan that Ilion
Was won, & Pirrus with his bright sworde
Whan he hent king Priam by the berde
And slough him (as saieth Eneidos)
As made al the hennes in the cloos
Whan they had loste of Chaũteclere the sight
But souerainly dame Pertelot shright
Wel louder than did Hasdruballes wife
Whan that her husbonde hath lost his life
And that the Romains had brent Cartage
She was so ful of turment and of rage
That wilfully in to the fire she sterte
And brent her selfe, with a stedfast herte.
O woful hennes, right so cried ye
As whan that Nero brent the cite
Of Rome, cried the senatours wiues
For that her husbondes should lese her liues
Withouten gilte Nero hath hem slaine
Now wol I turne to my tale againe.
The sely widowe, and her doughters two
Herde the hennes crie and make wo
And out at the dore sterte thei anon
And saw the foxe towarde the woode gon
And bare vpon his backe the Cocke away
And cried out harow and well away
A ha the Foxe, and after hem thei ran
And eke with staues, many a nother man
Ran Coll our dogge, Talbot, & eke garlonde
And Malkin, with her distaffe in her honde
Ran Cowe & Calfe, and eke the very Hogges
For they so sore aferde were of the dogges
And shouting of men, and of women eke
They ran so, her hert thought to breke
They yellen as fendes do in hell
The Duckes cried as men would hem quell

The

The Geese for feare flewe ouer the trees
Out of the Hiues came the swarme of Bees
So hidous was the noise, a benedicite
Certes Jacke Strawe, ne his meine
Ne made neuer shoutes halfe so shrill
Whan that thei would any Flemming kill
As that daie was made vpon the Foxe
Of brasse thei blewe the trompes and of boxe
Of horne & bone, i which thei blew & pouped
And therwith thei shriked and shouted
It semed, as though heauen should fall
Now good men I praie you herken all.
Lo how fortune tourneth sodainly
The hope and the pride of her enemy
This Cocke that laie vpon the Foxe backe
In all his drede, vnto the Foxe he spake
And saied, sir: if I were as ye
yet should I saie, as wise God helpe me
Tourneth ayen, ye proude churles all
A very pestilence vpon you fall
Now am I come vnto this woodes side
Maugre your hed, the Cocke shall here abide
I woll him eate in faith, and that anon
The Foxe answerd, in faith it shal be doen
And as he spake the worde, all sodainly
This Cocke brake from his mouth deliuerly
And high vpon a tree he flewe anon
And whan the Foxe sawe that he was gon
Alas (q he) O Chaunteclere alas
I haue (q he) doe to your trespas
In as moche as I made you aferde
Whã I you hent, & brought out of your yerde
But sir, I did it not in no wicked entent
Come doun, and I shall tel you what I ment
I shall you saie sothe, God helpe me so.
Naie than (q he) I shrewe vs bothe two
And first I shrewe my self, both blood & bones
If thou begile me ofter than ones
Thou shalt no more with thy flatterie
Doe me sing with a winking iye
For he that winketh, whan he should se
All wilfully, God let him neuer thee.
Naie (q ẏ Foxe) but God yeue him mischance
That is so indiscrete of gouernaunce
That iangleth, whã that he should haue pees
Lo, soche it is for to be recheles
And negligent, and trust on flatterie
But ye that holde this tale a lie
As of a Foxe, of a Cocke, and of a Hen
Taketh the moralite good men
For sainct Poule saieth, all that written is
To our doctrine it is written iwis
Taketh the frute, and let the chaffe be still
Now good God, if that it be thy will
As saieth my lorde, so make vs all good men
And bring vs to the high blesse. Amen.

¶ Here endeth the tale of the Nonnes Prieste, and here foloweth the Manciples Prologue.

Sir Nonnes Prieste, oure hoste saied anone
I blessed be thy breche and euery stone
This was a merie tale of Chauntecler
But by my trouth, if thou were seculer
Thou wouldest be a tredfoule a right
For if thou haue corage as thou hast might
Thee were nede of hennes, as I wene
ye more than seuen times seuentene
Se whiche braunes hath this gentle priest
So greate a necke, and soche a large breest
He loketh as a Sparhauke with his iyen
Him nedeth not his colours for to dien
With Brasill, ne with grain of Portingale
But sir, faire fall you for your tale
And after that, he with full mery chere
Saied to an other man, as ye shall here.
Wote ye not where stondeth a little toune
Whiche that is called Bob vp and doune
Under the blee, in Caunterburie waie
There gan our hoste to iape and to plaie
And saied, sirs: what? Dunne is in the mire
Is there no man, for praier ne for hire
That woll awake our felowe behinde
A these him might full lightly rob and binde
Se how he nappeth, se for cockes bones
How he woll fall from his hors atones
Is that a Coke of London, with mischaunce
Doe him comfort, he knoweth his penaunce
For he shall tell a tale by my fey
Although it be not worth a botell of Hey
Awake thou Coke (q he) God yeue the sorow
What eileth thee to slepe by the morow
Hast thou had fleen al night, or art thou drõk
Or hast thou al night w̃ some queen iswonke
So that thou maiest not hold vp thine hedde
This Coke ẏ was ful pale, & nothing redde
Saied, sir hoste: so God my soule blesse
There is fallen on me greate heuinesse
But I not why, me were leuer to slepe
Than the best gallon of wine in Chepe.
Well (q the Manciple) if it maie doe ease
To thee sir Coke, and to no wight displease
Whiche that here ride in this companie
And that our hoste will of his curtesie
I woll as now excuse thee of thy tale

For in good faithe thy visage is full pale
Thine eyen dase, sothly as me thinketh
And wel I wote, thy breth ful soure stinketh
That sheweth wel thou art not well disposed
Of me certain thou shalt not be glosed
See how he galpeth, lo this dronken wight
As though he would vs swalowe anon right
Holde close thy mouthe, by thy father kin
The deuill of hell set his foote therein
Thy cursed breath will enfect vs all
Fie stinking swine, fie foule mote thee befall
Taketh hede sirs of this lustie man
Now swete sir, woll ye iuste at the van
Thereto me thinketh ye be well shape
I trowe that ye haue dronken wine ape
And that is whan men plaie at strawe.
And with his speach ỹ coke waxed al wrawe
And on the Manciple he gan to nodde fast
For lacke of speache: & doun his hors him cast
Where as he laie, till that men him vp toke
This was a faire cheuesaunce of a coke
Alas that he ne had holde him by his ladill
And er that he ayen were in the sadill
There was a greate schouing to and fro
To lift him vp, and moche care and wo
So vnweldy was this sely palled goste
And to the Manciple than spake our hoste.

Bicause that drinke hath dominacion
Upon this man, by my saluacion
I trowe leudely woll he tell his tale
For were it wine, or old moistie ale
That he hath dronke, he speketh so in the nose
And sniueleth fast, and eke hath the pose.

He also hath to doe more than inough
To kepe him on his caple out of the slough
And if he fall from his caple ekt sone
Than shall we all haue inough to doen
In lifting vp his dronken corce
Tell on thy tale, of him make I no force.

But yet Mãciple, in faith thou art to nice
Thus openly to repreue him of his vice
In other daie he woll parauenture
Recleime thee, and bring thee to lure
I meane he speake will of smale thinges
And for to pinche at thy reckeninges
That were not honest, if it came to preue.

No (q the Mãciple) ỹ wer a great mischefe
So might he bring me into the snare
Yet had I leuer paie for the Mare
Which he rideth on, thã he should wt me striue
I woll not wrathe him, so mote I thriue
That I spake, I saied it but in bourde
And wote ye what, I haue here in my gourde
A draught of wine, ye of a ripe grape
And right anon ye shall se a good iape
This Coke shall drinke thereof, if I maie
Up pain of my life he woll not saie naie
And certainly, to tellen as it was
Of this vessell the Coke dranke fast, alas
What nedeth it, he dranke inough beforne
And whan he had pouped in his horne
To the Manciple he toke the gourde again
And of the drinke the Coke was full fain
And thonked him, in soche wise as he coud
Than gan our hoste to laugh wõder loude
And saied: I se well it is necessary
Where that we gon, good drinke wt vs to cary
For that will tourne rancour and disease
To accord and loue, & many a worde to pease
O Bacchus, iblessed be thy holy name
That so canst tourne earnest into game
Worshipe and thonke be to thy deite
Of that matter ye get no more of me.
Tell on thy tale thou Manciple, I thee praie
Well sir (q he) herkeneth what I saie.

Here endeth the Manciples Prologue, and here foloweth his Tale.

Whã Phebus dwelled here
in yearth adoun
As old bookes make men-
cioun
He was the most lustie
bacheler
Of all the worlde, and eke
the best archer
He slough Pheton the serpent, as he laie
Sleping ayenst the Sonne vpon a daie
And many an other noble worthy dede
He with his bowe wrought, as mẽ mow rede
Plaie he could on euery minstralcie
And sing, that it was a melodie
To here of his clere voice the soun
Certes the king of Thebes, Amphion
That with his song, walled the cite
Could neuer sing halfe so well as he
Thereto he was the semelist man
That is or was, sithe the worlde began
What nedeth it his feture to discriue?
For in this worlde nas none so faire a liue
He was therewith fulfilled of gentilnesse
Of honour, and of perfite worthinesse
This Phebus, ỹ was floure of bachelerie
As well in fredome, as in chiualrie
For his disport, in signe eke of victorie
Of Pheton, so as telleth vs the storie
Was wont to beare in his honde a bowe
Now had this Phebus in his hous a crowe
within

Within a cage ifostred many a daie
And taught it speache, as men teache a Jaie
White was this crowe, as is a white Swan
And counterfete the speache of euery man
He could, whan he should tell a tale
There was in all this world no Nightingale
Ne could, by an hundred thousande dele
Sing so wonderly mery and wele
Now had this Phebus in his hous a wife
Whiche that he loued more than his life
And night and daie, did euer his diligence
Her for to please, and doe her reuerence
Saue onely, if J the soth shall sain
Jelous he was, and wold haue kept her fain
For him were lothe, taped for to be
And so is euery wight, in soche degre
But all for nought, for it auaileth nought
A good wife, that is clene of werke & thought
Should not be kept in none awaite certain
And truely the labour is in vain
To kepe a shrewe, for it woll not be
This holde J for a very nicete
To spill labour, for to kepe wiues
Thus writeth old clerkes in her liues
But now to purpose, as J first began
This worthy Phebus, doeth all that he can
To please her, wening through soch plesaūce
And for his manhode, & for his gouernaunce
That no man should put him from her grace
But God it wote, there maie no man enbrace
As to distrain a thing, whiche that nature
Hath naturally set in a creature
Take any birde, and put him in a cage
And doe all thine entent, and thy corage
To foster it tenderly with meate and drinke
Of all dainties that thou canst bethinke
And kepe it also cleanly as thou maie
Although the cage of gold be neuer so gaie
yet had this birde, by twentie thousand fold
Leuer in a forest, that is wide and cold
Go eate wormes, and soche wretchednesse
For euer this birde will doe his businesse
To escape out of his cage, whan he maie
His libertie the birde desireth aie
Let take a Cat, and foster her with milke
And tender flesche, and make her couch of silke
And let her se a Mouse go by the wall
Anon she weiueth flesche, and couche, and all
And euery deintie, that is in that hous
Soche appetite hath she to eate the Mous
Lo here hath lust his dominacion
And appetite fleméth discrecion.
A shrewe, hath also a vilanous kinde
The leudest wolfe that we maie finde
Or lest of reputacion, that woll we take
In time whan her lust to haue a make
All these ensamples speake J by these men
That been vntrue, and nothing by women
For men haue euer a licorous appetite
On lower thing, to performe her delite
Than on her wiues, be thei neuer so faire
Ne neuer so true, ne so debonaire
Flesche is so newfangell, with mischaunce
That we ne con in nothing haue pleasaunce
That souneth vnto vertue, any while
This Phebus, whiche thought no gile
Disceiued was, for all his solite
For vnder him an other had she
A man of little reputacion
Nought worth to Phebus, in comparison
The more harme is, it happeth oft so
Of whiche there cometh moche harme, & wo
And so befell, whan Phebus was absent
His wife anon hath for her lemman sent
Her lemman, certes that is a knauishe speche
Forgeue it me, and that J you beseche.
The wife Plato saieth, as ye mowe rede
The worde must nedes accorde with the dede
If men should tell properly a thing
The worde must cosin be to the working
J am a boistous man, right thus saie J
There is but little difference truely
Betwirt a wife, that is of hie degre
If of her body dishonest she be
And a poore wenche, other than this
If it so be thei werke bothe amis
But for the gentill is in estate aboue
She shall be called his lady and his loue
And for that tother is a poore woman
She shal be called his wenche or his lēman
And God it wote, mine owne dere brother
Men laie as lowe that one as that other
Right so betwirt a titleless tiraunt
And an outlawe, or a these erraunt
The same J saie, there is no difference
To Alexaunder was told this sentence
That for the tiraunt is of greater might
By force of meine, to flea doune right
And brēn hous and home, and make al plain
Lo therfore is he called a capitain
And for the outlawe hath but small meine
And maie not doe so greate an harme, as he
Ne bring a countrey to so greate mischief
Men callen him an outlawe or a thief.
But for J am a man not textruele
J woll not tell of tertes neuer a dele
J woll go to my tale, as J began,
Whā Phebus wife had sent for her lēman
Anon thei wrought all their lustie bolage
This white crowe, that hing ais in the cage

Beheelde

Beheldе their werke, and saied neuer a worde
And whan home was cum Phebus the lorde
This crowe song cuckowe, cuckowe, cuckow
What birde (q Phebus) what singest thou?
Ne were thou not wont so merily to sing
That to my harte it was reteising
To heare thy voice, alas, what song is this?
By God (q he) I sing not amis
Phebus (q he) for all thy worthinesse
For all thy beaute, and thy gentilnesse
For all thy song, and thy minstralcie
For all thy waiting, blered is thine ye
With one of little reputacion
Not worthy to thee in comparison
The mountenãce of a gnat, so mote I thriue
For on the bedde, thy wife I sawe him swiue
What wol you more? q crow anon him told
By sad tokens, and by wordes bold
How that his wife had doen her lecherie
Him to greate shame, and to greate villanie
And tolde him eft, he sawe it with his yen
This Phebus gan awaiward for to prien
Him thought his wofull harte brast a two
His bowe he bent, and set therin a flo
And in his ire he hath his wife slain
This is the effect; there is no more to sain
For sorowe whereof he brake his minstralsie
Both Harpe and Lute, Getern, and Sautrie
And eke he brake his arowes, and his bowe
And after that, thus spake he to the crowe
Traitour (q he) with tong of Scorpion
Thou hast me brought to my confusion
Alas that I was wrought, why nere I dedde
O dere wife, O gemme, O lustie hedde
That were to me so sad, and eke so true
Now liest thou dedde, with face pale of hewe
Full giltlesse, that durst I sweare iwis
O rakell honde, to doe so foule amis
O troubled wit, O ire retcheleſse
That vnauised smitest giltlesse
O wantrust, full of false suspeccion
Where was thy wit and thy discrecion
O euery man beware of rekilnesse
Ne trowe nothing, without strong witnesse
Smite not to sone, or thou wete why
And be auised well and sikerly
Or ye doe any execucion
Vpon your ire, for suspection
Alas, a thousande folke hath rekell ire
Full foly doen, and brought hem in the mire
Alas for sorowe I woll my self sle
And to the crowe, O false thefe saied he
I woll quite anon thy false tale
Thou song whilom, like a Nitingale
Now shalt thou false thefe, thy song forgone
And eke thy white fethers euerychone
Ne neuer in all thy life shalt thou speake
Thus shull men on a traitour be awreake
Thou and thine offspring euer shall be blake
Ne neuer swete noise shall ye make
But euer criyng ayenst tempest and rain
In token, that through thee my wife is slain
And to the crowe he sterte, and that anon
And pulled of his white fethers euerichon
And made him blacke, & reft him al his song
And eke his speache, & out at doore him slong
Unto the deuill, whiche I him betake
And for this cause been all crowes blake.
Lordinges, by this ensãple I wol you pray
Beware, and take kepe what I saie
Ne telleth neuer no man in your life
How that an other man hath dight his wife
He woll you hate mortally certain
Dan Salomon, as wise clerkes sain
Teacheth a man to kepe his tong well
But as I saied, I am not textuell
But natheleſse, thus taught me my dame
My sonne thinke on the crowe a gods name
My sonne kepe wel thy tong, & kepe thy frend
A wicked tong is worse than a fend
My sonne, from a fende men maie hem blesse
My sonne, God of his endelesse goodnesse
Walled a tong with tethe, and lippes eke
For man should him auise what he speke
My sonne, full oft for to mikell speache
Hath many a man be spilt, as clerkes teache
But for little speache, spoken auisedly
Is no man shent, to speake generally
My sonne, thy tong shouldest thou restrain
At all times, but whan thou doest thy pain
To speake of God, in honour and praiere
The first vertue sonne, if thou wolt lere
Is to restrain, and kepe well thy tong
Thus learne children, whan thei be yong
My sonne, of mikell speaking vnauised
(There lasse speaking had inough suffised)
Cometh mikell harme, thus was me taught
In moche speache, sinne wanteth naught
Wostе thou wherfore a rakell tong serueth
Right as a sworde forcutteth and forkerueth
An arme on two, my dere sonne right so
A tong cutteth frendship all a two
A iangler is to God abhominable
Rede Salomon, so wise and honourable
Rede Dauid in his Psalmes, rede Senecke
My sonne speake not, ne with thy hedde beck
Dissimule as thou wer deef, if that thou here
The ianglour speaketh of perlous mattere.
The Flẽming saieth, learne if that thou lesse
That little iangling causeth moche resse

My

My sonne, if thou no wicked worde hast said
Thee dare not drede for to be bewraid
But he that hath missaied, I dare well sain
He maie by no waie clepe his worde again
Thing that is saied, is saied, and forth it goth
Though him repent, or him be neuer so loth
He is thrall to him, to whom he hath saied
I tale, for whiche is now euill apaied
My sonne beware, and be non authour new
Of tidinges, whether thei be false or true
Where so thou come, emong hie or lowe
Kepe well thy tong, and thinke on the crowe

¶ Here endeth the Manciples tale, and here begynneth the Plowmannes Prologue.

THe Plowman pluched vp his plowe
When Midsomer Moone was comen in
And saied his bestes shuld eate inowe
And lige in the Grasse vp to the chin
Thei been feble bothe Orc and Cowe
Of hem nis left but bone and skinne
He spoke of her there and coulter of drowe
And honged his harnis on a pinne.

He toke his tabarde and his staffe eke
And on his hedde he set his hat
And saied he would sainct Thomas seke
On pilgremage he goth forth plat
In scrippe he bare bothe bread and leekes
He was forswonke and all forswat
Men mist haue sen through both his cheekes
And euery wang toth and where it sat.

Our hoste beheldc well all about
And sawe this man was Sunne ibrent
He knewe well by his senged snout
And by his clothes that were to rent
He was a man wont to walke about
He nas not alwaie in cloister ipent
He could not religiousliche lout
And therefore was he fully shent.

Our hoste him ared, what man art thou?
Sir (q he) I am an hine
For I am wont to go to the plow
And earne my meate yer that I dine
To swette and swinke I make auowe
My wife and children therewith to finde
And serue God and I wist how
But we leude men been full blinde.

For clerkes saie we shullen be sain
For her liuelod swette and swinke
And thei right nought vs giue again
Neither to eate ne yet to drinke
Thei mowe by lawe, as thei sain
Vs curse and dampne to hell brinke
Thus thei putten vs to pain
With candles queint and belles clinke

Thei make vs thralles at her lust
And sain we mowe not els be saued
Thei haue the corne and we the dust
Who speaketh there again thei saie he raued
What man (q our hoste) canst thou preache
Come nere and tel vs some holy thing
Sir q he, I heard ones teache
A priest in pulpit a good preaching.

Saie one q our hoste, I thee beseche
Sir I am redy at your bidding
I praie you that no man me reproche
While that I am my tale telling.

¶ Thus endeth the Prologue, and here foloweth the first parte of the tale.

ASterne strife is stired newe
In many stedes in a stounde
Of sondry sedes that been sewe
It semeth that some been vnsounde
For some be greate growen vngrounde
Some been souble, simple and small
Whether of hem is falser founde
The falser foule mote him befall.

That one side is that I of tell
Popes, Cardinals, and Prelates
Parsons, Monkes, and Freres fell
Priours, Abbottes, of greate estates
Of heauen and hell thei kepe the yeates
And Peters successours thei been all
This is demed by old dates
But falshed foule mote it befall.

The other side been poore and pale
And people put out of prease
And seme caitifes fore a cale
And euer in one without encrease
I clepeth lollers and londlese
Who toteth on hem thei been vntall

Thei been araied all for the peace
But falshed soule mote it befall.

Many a countrey haue I sought
To knowe the falser of these two
But euer my trauaile was for nought
All so ferre as I haue go
But as I wandred in a wro
In a wood beside a wall
Two soules sawe I sit tho
The falser soule mote him befall.

That one did plete on the Popes side
A Griffon of a grimme stature
A Pellicane withouten pride
To these lollers laied his lure
He mused his matter in measure
To counsaile Christ euer gan he call
The Griffon shewed as sharpe as fire
But falshed soule mote it befall.

The Pellicane began to preache
Bothe of mercie and of mekenesse
And saied that Christ so gan vs teache
And meke and merciable gan blesse
The Euangely beareth witnesse
Iambe he likeneth Christ ouer all
In tokening that he mekest was
Sith pride was out of heauen fall.

And so should euery Christened be
Priestes, Peters successours
Beth lowliche and of lowe degre
And vsen none yearthly honours
Neither croune, ne curious couetours
Ne pilloure, ne other proude pall
Ne nought to cofren vp great treasours
For falshed soule mote it befall.

Priestes should for no cattell plede
But chasten hem in charite
Ne to no battaile should men lede
For inhaunsing of her owne degre
Nat wilne sittinges in hie see
Ne souerainte in hous ne hall
All worldly worship defie and flee
For who so willeth highnes soule shall fall.

Alas who maie soche sainctes call
That wilneth welde yearthly honour
As lowe as Lucifere soche shall fall
In balefull blacknesse ibuilden her boure
That eggeth the people to errour
And maketh them to hem thrall
To Christ I holde soche one traitour
As lowe as Lucifer soche one shall fall.

That willeth to be kinges peeres
And higher than the Emperour
Some that were but poore freres
Now wollen waxe a warriour
God is not her gouernour
That holdeth no man his permagall
While couetise is her counsailour
All soche falshed mote nede fall.

That hie on horse willeth ride
In glitterande golde of greate araie
Ipainted and portred all in pride
No common knight maie go so gaie
Chaunge of clothing euery daie
With golden girdels greate and small
As boistous as is Bere at baie
All soche falshed mote nede fall.

With pride punished the poore
And some thei sustain with sale
Of holie churche maketh an hore
And filleth her wombe with wine and ale
With money filled many a male
And chaffren churches when thei fall
And telleth the people a leude tale
Soche false faitours soule hem befall.

With chaunge of many maner meates
With song and solas sitting long
And filleth her wombe, and fast fretes
And from the meate to the gong
And after meate with harpe and song
And eche man mote hem Lordes call
And hote spices euer emong
Soche false faitours soule hem fall.

And miters mo than one or two
Iperled as the quenes hedde
A staffe of golde, and pirrie lo
As heuie as it were made of lead
With clothe of gold bothe newe and redde
With glitterande gold as grene as gall
By dome will dampne men to dedde
All soche faitours soule hem fall.

And Christes people proudly curse
With brode boke, and braiyng bell
To put pennies in her purse
Thei woll sell bothe heauen and hell
And in her sentence and thou wilt dwell
Thei willen gelle in her gaie hall
And though the soth thou of hem tell
In greate curling shalt thou fall.

That is blessed, that thei blesse
And cursed that thei curse woll
And thus the people thei oppresse
And haue their lordshippes at full
And many be marchauntes of woll
And to purs pennies wol come thrall
The pore people thei al to pull
Suche false faitours foule hem fall

Lordes mote to hem loute
Obeysaunt to her brode blessing
Thei riden with her royal route
On a courser, as it were a king
With sadle of golde glittering
With curious harneis quaintly crallit
Stiroppes gaye of golde mastling
All suche falshed foule befal it

Christes ministers clepen they bene
And rulen al in robberie
But Antichriste thy seruen clene
Attired al in tirannie
Witnesse of Ihons prophecie
That Antichriste is her admirall
Tiffelers attired in trecherie
Al suche faitours foule hem fall

Who saith that some of hem may sinne
He shalbe dome to be deed
Some of hem wol gladly winne
Al ayenst that whiche God forbed
Al holiest they clepen her heed
That of her rule is regall
Alas that euer thei eeten breed
For al such falshed wol foule fall

Her heed loueth al honour
And to be worshipped in worde and dede
Kinges mote to hem knele and coure
To the Apostles, that Christ forbede
To popes hestes suche taketh more hede
Than to kepe Christes commaundement
Of gold and siluer mote ben her wede
Thei holdeth him hole omnipotent

He ordaineth by his ordinaunce
To parishe prielles a powere
To another a greater auaunce
A greater point to his mistere
But for he is highest in erth here
To him reserueth he many a point
But to Christ that hath no pere
Reserueth he neither opin no ioynt

So semeth he aboue all
And Christ abouehim nothinge
Whan he sitteth in his stall
Dampneth and saueth as him thinke
Suche pride tofore God doth stinke
An angel bad Ihon to him not knele
But only to God do his bowinge
Suche willers of worship must nede euil fele

Thei ne clepen Christ, but sanctus deus
And clepen her heed Sanctissimus
They that suche a secte sewis
I trowe thei taken hem amisse
In erth here they haue her blisse
Her hie master is Beliall
Christes people from hem wisse
For al suche false will foule fall

They mowe both binde and lose
And all is for her holy lise
To saue or dampne they mowe chose
Betwene hem now is great strife
Many a man is killed with a knife
To wete which of hem haue lordship shall
For suche Christ suffred woundes fiue
For all suche falshed will foule fall

Christ said: Qui gladio percutit
With swerde shall die
He bad his prielles peace and grith
And bad hem not drede for to die
And bad them be both simple and slie
And carke not for no cattell
And trusteth on God that sitteth on hie
For al false shal foule fall

These wollen make men to swere
Ayenst Christes commaundement
And Christes members al to tere
On roode, as he were newe yrent
Suche lawes thei maken by commen assent
Eche on it chooweth as a ball
Thus the poore be fully shent
But euer falshed foule it befall

Thei vsen no simonie
But sellen churches and priories
Ne they vsen no enuie
But cursen al hem contraries
And hireth men by daies and yeres
With strength to holde hem in her stall
And culleth al her aduersaries
Therfore falshed foule thou fall

With purse they purchase personage
With purse thei paynen hem to plede

And men of warre they wol wage
To bring her enemies to the dede
And lordes liues they wol lede
And muche take, and giue but small
But he it so get, from it shal shede
And make suche falsе right foule fall

They halowe nothing but for hire
Churche, font, ne bellement
And make orders in euery shire
But prieſtes pay for the parchement
Of riatours they taken rent
Ther with they smere the shepes skall
For many churches ben oft suspent
And al suche falshed yet foule it fall

Some liueth not in lecherie
But haunten wenches, widowes, & wiues
And punisheth the poore for putree
Them selfe it vseth al their liues
And but a man to them thriues
To heuen come he neuer shall
He shal be curled as be caitiues
To hel thei saine that he shal fall

There was more mercy in Maximien
And in Nero, that neuer was good
Than is now in some of them
Whan he hath on his furred hoode
They folowe Christ that shede his bloode
To heuen, as buckette in to the wall
Suche wrecches ben worse than woode
And al suche faitours foule hem fall

They giue her almes to the riche
To mainteynours, and to men of lawe
For to lordes they wol be liche
An harlottes sonne not worthe an hawe
Sothfastnesse suche han slawe
They kembe her crokettes with christall
And drede of God they haue doune drawe
Al suche faitours foule hem fall

They maken parsons for the pennie
And Canons of her Cardinals
Vnnethes amongest hem al any
That he ne hath glosed the gospel fals
For Christe made neuer no Cathedrals
Ne with him was no Cardinall
With a redde hatte as vsen minstrals
But falshed foule mote it befall

Their tithing, and her offring bothe
They cleineth it by possession
Therof nil they none forgo
But robben men as raunsome
The tithinge of Turpe lucrum
With these maisters is meinall
Tithinge of bribry, and larson
Will make falshed full foule to fall

They taken to ferme her tompnours
To harme the people what they may
To pardoners, and false faitours
Sell her seales I dare wel say
And all to holden great arraie
To multiply hem more metall
They drede fut litel domes day
Whan al suche shal foule fall

Suche harlottes shul men disclaunder
For they shullen make her gree
And ben as proude as Alexander
And sain to the poore, wo be ye
By yere eche prieſt shal paie his fee
To encrease his lemmans call
Suche heerdes shul wel iuel the
And al suche false shul foule fall

And if a man be falsely famed
And wol make purgacioun
Than wol the officers be agramed
And assigne him fro toun to toun
So nede he muste pay raunsome
Though he be clene, as is Christall
And than haue an absolution
But al suche false shul foule fall

Though he be giltie of the dede
And that he may money paie
Al the while his purse wol blede
He may vse it fro day to day
The bishopes officers gone ful gay
And this game they vsen ouer all
The poore to pil is al their play
Al suche false shul foule fall

Alas, God ordained neuer suche lawe
Ne no suche craftе of couetise
He forbad it by his lawe
Suche gouernours mowen of God agrise
For al his rules is right wise
These newe pointes ben pure papall
And goddes lawe they dispice
And al suche faitours shul foule fall

They saine that Peter had the key
Of heuen and hel, to haue and holde
I trowe Peter toke no money
For no sinnes that he solde

Suche

Suche succeſſours ben to bolde
In winning al their witte they wyal
Yer conſcience is waxen colde
And al ſuche faitours foule hem fal.

Peter was neuer ſo great a fole
To leaue his key with ſuche a lozell
Oz take ſuche curſed ſuche a tole
He was aduiſed nothing well
I trowe they haue the key of hell
Their maiſter is of that place marſhall
Foz there thei dreſſen hem to dwell
And with falſe Lucifer there to fall.

Thei ben as proude as Lucifarre
As angry, and as enuious
From good faith they ben ful farre
In couetiſe they ben curious
To catche catel as couitous
As hounde, that foz hungre wol yall
Ungodly, and vngracious
And nedely ſuche falſhed ſhal foule fall.

The Pope and he were Peters heire
Me thinke he erreth in this caſe
When choſe of biſhops is in diſpaire
To choſen hem in diuers place
I lorde ſhal write to him foz grace
Foz his clerke anone pray he ſhall
So ſhal he ſpede his purchaſe
And al ſuche falſe foule hem fall.

Though he can no more good
A lordes praier ſhalbe ſpedde
Though he be wilde of wil oz wood
Nat vnderſtanding what men han redde
A leude boſter, and that God forbedde
As good a biſhoppe is my horſe ball
Suche a Pope is foule beſtedde
And at laſte wol foule fall.

He maketh biſhops foz erthly thanke
And nothing foz Chriſtes ſake
Suche that ben ful fat and ranke
To ſoule heale none hede they take
Al is wel done what euer they make
Foz they ſhal anſwere at ones foz all
Foz worldes thanke, ſuch worch and wake
And al ſuche falſe ſhal foule fall.

Suche that can nat her Crede
With praier ſhul be made prelates
Nother canne the goſpell rede
Suche ſhul now welde hie eſtates
The hie goddes frendſhip hem makes
Thei toteth on her ſumme totall
Suche bere the keyes of hel yates
And ſuche falſe ſhal foule fall

Thei forſake foz Chriſtes loue
Trauaile, hungre, thurſt, and colde
Foz they ben ordred ouer al aboue
Out of youth til they ben olde
By the doze they go, nat in to the folde
To helpe their ſhepe they nought traual
Hired men al ſuche I holde
And al ſuche falſe foule hem fal

Foz Chriſt our king thei wol forſake
And knowe him nought foz his pouerte
Foz Chriſtes loue they wol wake
And drinke piement ale aparte
Of God they ſeme nothing a ferde
As lucky liueth, as did Lamual
And driuen her ſhepe into deſert
Al ſuche faitours ſhul foule fal.

Chriſt hath .xii. Apoſtles here
Nowe ſay they, there may be but one
That may not erre in no manere
Who leueth not this ben loſt echone
Peter erred, ſo did not Jhon
Why is he cleped the principall?
Chriſte cleped him Peter, but himſelfe the ſtone
Al falſe faitours foule hem fal.

Why curſen they the croiſery
Chriſtes chriſten creatures
Foz bytwene him is now enuy
To be enhaunſed in honours
And Chriſten liuers with her labours
Foz they leuin on no man mortal
But do to deth with diſhonours
And al ſuche falſe foule hem fal

What knoweth a tilloure at the plowe
The popes name, and what he hate
His crede ſuffiſeth to him inowe
And knoweth a cardinal by his hatte
Rough is the pooze vnrightly latte
That knoweth Chriſt his God royal
Suche maters be not worth a gnatte
But ſuche falſe faitours foule hem fal

A king ſhal knele and kiſſe his ſhowe
Chriſt ſuffered a ſinful to kiſſe his fete
Me thinketh he holdeth him hie inowe
So Lucifer did, that hie ſet
Suche one me thinketh him ſelfe forget
Either to the trouth he was nat cal

Christe that suffered woundes wete
Shall make suche falshed soule fall.

They laieth out her large nettes
For to take siluer and golde
Fillen coffers, and sackes fettes
There as they soules catche sholde
Her seruauntes be to them vnholde
But they can doublin their rentall
To bigge hem castles, and bigge hem holde
And al suche falle soule hem fall.

¶ Here endeth the first parte of this tale and here after folweth the seconde parte.

TO accorde w this worde fall
No more Englishe can I finde
Shewe another nowe I shall
For I haue mochе to saye behinde
How prielles han the people pinde
As curteis Christe hath me kinde
And put this matter in my minde
To make this maner men amende

Shortely to shende hem, and shewe nowe
How wrongfully they werche and walke
O hie God, nothing they tell, ne howe
But in goddes worde, telleth many a balke
In harnes holde hem and in halke
And preachen of tithes and offrende
And vntruely of the gospel talke
For his mercy God it amende

What is Antichriste to saie
But euen Christes aduersarie
Suche hath now ben many a daie
To Christes bidding ful contraie
That from the trueth clene warry
Out of the way they ben weende
And Christes people vntruely cary
God for his pitie it amende

They liuen contrary to Christes life
In hie pride against mekenesse
Against suffraunce they vsen strife
And angre ayenst sobrenesse
Against wisedom wilfulnesse
To Christes tales litel tende
Against measure outragiousnesse
But whan God wol it may amende

Lordely life ayenst lowelinesse
And demin al without mercy
And couetise ayenste largesse
Against trewech trechery
And against almesse enuy
Against Christ they comprehende
For chastite they mainteine lechery
God for his grace this amende

Against penaunce thei vse delightes
Against suffraunce stronge defence
Ayenst God they vsen euill rightes
Ayenst pitie punishementes
Open euil ayenst continence
Her wicked winning worse dispende
Sobrenesse they sette in to dispence
But God for his goodnesse it amende

Why cleimen they holy his powere
And wranglen ayenst al his hestes
His liuing folowe thei nothing here
But liuen worse than witlesse beestes
Of fishe and flesche they louen feestes
As lordes they ben brode ikende
Of goddes poore thei haten gestes
God for his mercy this amende

With diuers suche shal haue her dome
That saine that they be Christes frendes
And do nothing as they should done
Al suche ben falser than ben fendes
On the people they ley suche bendes
As God is in earth they han offende
Succour for such Christe nowe sende vs
And for his mercy this amende

A token of Antichrist they be
His carectes ben nowe wide iknowe
Receiued to preache shal no man be
Without token of him I trowe
Eche christen preest, to prechin owe
From God aboue thei ben sende
Goddes worde, to al folke for to showe
Sinful man for to amende

Christ sent the poore for to preche
The royal riche he did not so
Now dare no poore the people teache
For Antichrist is ouer al her foe
Among the people he mote go
He hath bidden, al suche suspende
Some hath he hent, and thinketh yet mo
But al this God may wel amende

Al tho that han the worlde forsake

And

And liuen lowly, as God badde
Into her prison shullen be take
Betin and bounden, and forth ladde
Hereof I rede no man be dradde
Christ saide, his should be shende
Eche man ought hereof be gladde
For God ful wel it wol amende

They take on hem royall power
And say they haue swerdes two
One curse to hel, one slee men here
For at his taking Christ had no mo
yet Peter had of tho
But Christ, to Peter smite gan defende
And in to the sheth badde put it tho
And al suche mischeues God amende

Christ badde Peter kepe his shepe
And with his sworde forbade hem smite
Swerde is no tole with shepe to kepe
But to sheperdes that shepe wol bite
Me thinketh suche sheperdes ben to wite
Ayen her shepe with swerde that contende
They driue her shepe with great dispite
But al this God may well amende

So successours to Peter be they nought
whome Christe made chefe pasture
A swerde no sheperde bsen ought
But he would slee, as a bochoure
For who so were Peters successoure
Should bere his shepe til his backe bende
And shadowe hem from euery shoure
And al this God may wel amende

Successours to Peter ben these
In that, that Peter Christe forsoke
That had leuer the loue of God lese
Than a sheperde had to lese his hoke
He culleth the shepe as doth the Coke
Of hem taken they woll buntrende
And falsely glose the Gospell boke
God for his mercy them amende

After Christ had take Peter the kay
Christ saide, he muste die for man
That Peter to Christ gan withsay
Christe bad him go behinde Sathan
Suche counsailours many of these men han
For worldes wele, God to offende
Peters successours they ben for than
But al suche God may wel amende

For Sathan is to say no more
But he that contrary to Christ is
In this they lerne Peters lore
They sewen him whan he did misse
They folowe Peter forsoth in this
In al that Christ would Peter reprehende
But nat in that, that longeth to heuin blisse
God for his mercy hem amende

Some of the apostels they sewen in case
Of ought that I can vnderstonde
Him that betraied Christ, Judas
That bare the purse in euery londe
And al that he might sette on honde
He hidde and stale, and mispende
His rule these traitours han in honde
Almighty God hem amende

And at the last his lorde gan tray
Curstedly through his falsse couetise
So woulde these traine him for money
And they wisten in what wise
They be seker of the selfe enlise
From al sothnesse they ben frende
And couetise chaungen with queintise
Almighty God al suche amende

were Christ on erth here efte sone
These would dampne him to die
All his hestes they han fordone
And saine his sawes ben heresie
And ayenst his commaundementes they crie
And dampne all his to be brende
For it liketh not hem suche losengerie
God Almighty hem amende

These han more might in Englande here
Than hath the king and all his lawe
They han purchased hem suche powere
To taken hem whom list not knawe
And say that heresie is her sawe
And so to prison wol him sende
It was not so by elder dawe
God for his mercy it amende

The kinges lawe wol no man deme
Angerliche without answere
But if any man these misqueme
He shall be baighteth as a bere
And yet wel worse they wol him tere
And in prison wol him pende
In gines, and other gere
whan God woll, it may amende

The kinge tareth nat his men
But by assent of the comminalte
But these eche yere wol raunsom hem

The Plowmannes tale.

Maisterfully, more than dothe he
Her seales dy vere better be
Than is the kinges in extende
Her officers han greater fee
But this mischefe God amende

For who so wol proue a testament
That is nat al worth tenne pounde
He shal paye for the parchement
The thirde of the money all rounde
Thus the people is raunsounde
They saie suche parte to hem should apende
There as they gripen it goeth to grounde
God for his mercy it amende

A simple fornicacion
Twenty shillinges he shall pay
And than haue an absolucion
And al the yere vsen it forthe he may
Thus thei letten hem go a stray
Thei recke nat though the soule be brende
These kepen iuel Peters kay
And al suche sheperdes God amende

Wonder is, that the parliamente
And all the lordes of this londe
Here to taken so litel entente
To helpe the people out of her honde
For thei ben harder in their bonde
Worse beate, and better brende
Than to the king is vnderstande
God him helpe this to amende.

What Bishoppes, what religions
Han in this lande as muche lay fee
Lordeshippes and possessions
Morethan Lordes, it semeth me
That maketh hem lese charite
They mowe not to God attende
In earth thei haue so highe degre
God for his mercy it amende

The Emperour yafe the Pope somtime
So high lordeship him about
That at laste the sely hime
The proude Pope put him out
So of this realme is in dout
But lordes beware and them defende
For nowe these folke be wonders stoute
The king and lordes now this amende.

¶ Thus endeth the seconde parte
of this tale, and hereafter
followeth the
thirde,

Moyses lawe forbode it tho
That preestes should no lordshippes welde
Christes gospell biddeth also
That they should no lordshippes helde
Ne Christes apostels were neuer so bolde
No suche lordshippes to hem enbrace
But smeren her shepe and kepe her folde
God amende him for his grace

For thei ne ben but counterfete
Men may know hem by her fruite
Her greatnesse maketh hem God forgete
And take his mekenesse in dispite
And thei were poore and had but lite
Thei nolde nat demen after the face
But norishe her shepe, and hem nat bite
God amende hem for his grace

Griffon.

What canst thou preche ayenst Chanons
That men clepen seculere?
Pers. Thei ben curates of many tounes
On yearth they haue great powere
They haue great prebendes and dere
Some two or thre, and some mo
A personage to ben a playing fere
And yet thei serue the king also

And let to ferme all that fare
To whom that wol moste giue therfore
Some wol spende, and some woll spare
And some wol laye it vp in store
A cure of soule they care not fore
So thei mowe money take
Whether her soules be wonne or lore
Her profites they woll not forsake

They haue a gedering procuratour
That can the pore people enplede
And robben hem as a rauinour
And to his lorde they money lede
And catche of quicke and eke of dede
And richen him and his lorde eke
And to robbe the poore can giue good rede
Of olde and yonge, of hole and sicke

Therwith they purchase hem lay fee
In londe, there hem liketh best
And builde also brode as a cite
Both in the East, and eke in the west
To purchase thus they ben ful prest
But on the poore they woll nought spende
Ne no good giue to goddes gest

Ne

Ne sende him some that all hath sende.

By her seruice soche woll liue
And trust that other into treasure
Though all her parishe die vnshriue
Thei woll nat giue a rose floure
Her life should be as a mirrour
Bothe to lered and to leude also
And teache the people her lele labour
Soche misser men been all misgo.

Some of hem been hard nigges
And some of hem been proude and gaie
Some spende her good vpon gigges
And finden hem of greate araie
Alas, what thinke these men to saie
That thus dispenden Goddes good
At the dreadfull domes daie
Soche wretches shull be worse than wood.

Some her churches neuer ne sie
Ne neuer o penie, thider ne sende
Though the poore parishens for hunger die
O penie on hem will thei not spende
Haue thei receiuing of the rente
Thei recke neuer of the remenaunt
Alas, the deuill hath cleane hem blente
Soche one is sathanas soiournaunt.

And slen horedome and harlottrie
Couetise, pompe, and pride
Slothe, wrathe, and che enuie
And sewen sinne by euery side
Alas, where thinke soche tabide
How woll thei accomptes yelde
From hie God thei mowe hem not hide
Soche willers witte is not worth a nelde.

Thei been so rooted in richesse
That Christes pouert is foryet
Serued with so many messe
Hem thinketh that Manna is no meate
All is good that thei mowen geat
Thei were to liue euermore
But whan God at dome is seat
Soche treasour is a feble store.

Unneth mote thei Matins saie
For counting and courtholding
And yet he iangeleth as Jaie
And vnderstont himself nothing
He woll serue bothe Erle and King
For his finding and his fee
And hide his tithing and his offring
This is a feble charite.

Other thei been proude, or coueitous
Or thei been hard, or hungrie
Or thei been liberall or lecherous
Or els medlers with Mawmetrie
Or mainteiners of men with maistrie
Or stewardes, countours, or pleadours
And serue God in ypocrisie
Soche priestes been Christes false traitours.

Thei been false, thei been vengeable
And begilen men in Christes name
Thei been vnstedfast and vnstable
To traie her lorde, hem thinketh no shame
To serue God thei been full lame
Goddes theues, and falsely steale
And falsely Goddes worde defame
In winning is her worldes weale.

Antichrist these serue all
I praie thee who maie saie naie?
With Antichrist soche shull fall
Thei folowen him in deede and saie
Thei seruen hem in riche arraie
To serue Christ soche falsely fain
Why, at the dreadfull domes daie
Shull thei not folowe him to pain?

That knowen hem self that thei doen ill
Ayenst Christes commaundement
And amende hem neuer ne will
But serue sathan by one assent
Who saieth soche he shall be shent
Or speaketh ayenst her false liuing
Who so well liueth shall be brent
For soche been greater than the king.

Popes, Bishops, and Cardinals
Chanons, Parsons, and Vicare
In Goddes seruice I trowe been fals
That Sacramentes sellen here
And been as proude as Lucifere
Eche man loke whether that I lie
Who so speaketh ayenst her powere
It shall be holden hereste.

Loke how many orders take
Onely of Christ, for his seruice
That the worldes goodes forsake
Who so taketh orders, or other wise
I trowe that thei shall sore agrise
For all the glose that thei conne
All sewen not this assise
In euill time thei thus begonne.

Loke how many emong hem all

The Plowmannes tale.

Holden not this hie waie
With Antichriſt thei ſhullen fall
For thei wollen God betraie
God amende hem that beſt maie
For many men thei maken ſhende
Thei weten well the ſothe I ſaie
But the deuill hath foule hem blende.

Some on her churches dwell
Apparailled poorely, proude of porte
The ſeuen ſacramentes thei doen ſell
In cattell catching is her comfort
Of eche matter thei wollen mell
And doen hem wrong is her diſport
To afraie the people thei been fell
And hold hem lower than doeth the lorde.

For the tithing of a Ducke
Or of an Apple, or an Aie
Thei make men ſwere vpon a boke
Thus thei foulen Chriſtes faie
Soche bearen euill heauen kaie
Thei mowen aſſoile, thei mowe ſhriue
With mennes wiues ſtrongly plaie
With true tillers ſturte and ſtriue.

At the wreſtling, and at the wake
And chief chauntours at the nale
Market beaters, and medling make
Hoppen and houten with heue and hale
At faire freſhe, and at wine ſtale
Dine and drinke, and make debate
The ſeuen Sacramentes let a ſaile
How kepe ſoche the kaies of heauen gate.

Mennes wiues thei wollen hold
And though that thei been right lorry
To ſpeake thei ſhull not be ſo bold
For ſompning to the Conſiſtory
And make hem ſaie mouthe I lie
Though thei it ſawe with her ye
His lemman holden openly
No man ſo hardy to aſke why

He woll haue tithing and offring
Maugre whoſoeuer it grutche
And twiſe on the daie he woll ſing
Goddes prieſtes nere none ſoche
He mote on hunting with dogge and biche
And blowen his horne, and crien hey
And ſorcerie vſen as a witche
Soche kepen euill Peters key.

Yet thei mote haue ſome ſtocke or ſtone
Gaile painted, and proudly dight
To maken men liuen vpon
And ſaie that it is full of might
About ſoche, men ſet vp great light
Other ſoche ſtockes ſhull ſtande therby
As darke as it were midnight
For it maie make no maſtrie.

That it leude people ſe mowe
Thou Mary, thou worcheſt wonder thinges
About that, that men offren to now
Hongen broches, ouches, and ringes
The prieſt purchaſeth the offringes
But he nill offer to none Image
Woe is the ſoule that he for ſinges
That preacheth for ſoche a pilgrimage.

To men and women that been poore
That been Chriſtes awne likeneſſe
Men ſhullen offer at her doore
That ſuffre hunger and diſtreſſe
And to ſoche Images offer leſſe
That mowe not fele thurſt ne cold
The poore in ſpirite gan Chriſt bleſſe
Therfore offreth to feble and old.

Buckelers brode, and ſwordes long
Baudrike, with baſelardes kene
Soche toles about her necke thei hong
With Antichriſt ſoche prieſtes been
Upon her deedes it is well ſeen
Whom thei ſeruen, whom thei honouren
Antichriſtes thei been clene
And Goddes goodes falſly deuouren.

Of ſcarlet and grene gaie gounes
That mote be shape for the newe
To clippen and kiſſen counten in tounes
The damoſeles that to the daunce ſewe
Cutted clothes to ſewe her hewe
With long pikes on her ſhone
Our Goddes Goſpell is not true
Either thei ſeruen the deuill or none.

Now been prieſtes pokes ſo wide
That men muſt enlarge the veſtiment
The holy Goſpell thei doen hide
For the contrarien in raiment
Soche prieſtes of Lucifer been ſent
Like conquerours thei been araied
The proude pendauntes at her ars ipent
Falſely the trueth thei han betraied.

Shrift ſiluer ſoche wollen aſke is
And woll men crepe to the crouche
None of the Sacramentes ſaue aſhes

Without

Without mede shall no man touche
On her Bishop their warant vouche
That is lawe of the decre
With mede and money thus thei mouche
And thus thei sain is charite.

In the middes of her Masse
Thei nill haue no man but for hire
And full shortly let forth passe
Soche shull men finde in eche shire
That parsonages for profite desire
To liue in liking and in lustes
I dare not sain, Sans ose ieo dire
That soche been Antichristes prestes

Or thei yet the bishoppes why
Or thei mote been in his seruice
And holden forth her harlottrie
Soche prelates been of feable empryse
Of Goddes grame soche men agrise
For soche matters that taken mede
How thei excuse hem, and in what wise
Me thinketh thei ought greatly drede.

Thei sain that it to no man longeth
To reproue them though thei erre
But sally Goddes goodes thei fongeth
And therwith maintein wo and werre
Her deedes should be as bright as sterre
Her liuing, leude mannes light
Thei saie the Pope maie not erre
Nede must that passe mannes might.

Though a priest lie w his lemman al night
And tellen his felowe, and he him
He goth to Masse anon right
And saieth he singeth out of time
His birde abideth him at his inne
And dighteth his diner the meane while
He singeth his Masse for he would winne
And so he weneth God begile.

Hem thinketh long till thei be met
And that thei vsen forth all the yere
Emong the folke whan he is set
He holdeth no man halfe his pere
Of the Bishop he hath powere
To soile men, or els thei been lore
His absolucion maie make them shere
And wo is the soule that he singeth for.

The Grifon began for to threte
And saied, of Monkes canst thou ought
The Pellican said, thei been full grete
And in this world moche wo hath wrought
Sainct Benet, that her order brought
Ne made hem neuer on soche manere
I trowe it came neuer in his thought
That thei should vse so great power.

That a man should a Monke lorde call
He serue on knees, as a king
He is as proude as Prince in pall
In meate, and drinke, and all thing
Some wearen miter and ring
With double worsted well idight
With roiall meate and riche drinke
And rideth on a courser as a knight.

With hauke and with houndes ehe
With broches or ouches on his hoode
Some saie no Masse in all a weke
Of deinties is her moste foode
With lordshippes and with bondmen
This is a roiall region
Sainct Benet made neuer non of hem
To haue lordship of man ne toune.

Now thei been queint and curious
With fine clothe clad and serued cleane
Proude, angrie, and enuious
Malice is moche that thei meane
In catching craftie and couetous
Lordly liuen in greate liking
This liuing is not religious
According to Benet in his liuing.

Thei been clerkes, her courtes thei ouer se
Her poore tenaunce fully thei slite
The hier that a man a merced be
The gladlier thei wollit write
This is farre from Christes pouerte
For all with couetise thei endite,
On the poore thei haue no pite
Ne neuer hem cherishe but ouer with bite.

And commenly soche been comon
Of poore people, and of hem begete
That this perfection han inomen
Her fathers riden nat but on her fete
And trauailen sore for that thei eate
In pouert liueth yong and old
Her fathers suffreth drought and weate
Many hungrie meales, thurst, and cold.

And all this the Monkes han forsake
For Christes loue and sainct Benete
To pride and ease heue hem take
This religion is euill beseate
Had thei been out of religion

Thei

The Plowmannes tale.

Thei muſt haue hanged at the plowe
Threſhing and dihing fro toune to toune
With ſoꝛie meate, and not halfe inowe.

Therfoꝛe thei han this all foꝛſake
And taken to riches, pꝛide, and eaſe
Full fewe foꝛ God woll Monkes hem make
Little is ſoche oꝛder foꝛ to pꝛaiſe
Sainct Benet oꝛdained it not ſo
But bad hem be chereliche
In churliche maner liue and go
Boiſtous in yearth, and not loꝛdliche.

Thei diſclaunder ſainct Benet
Therfoꝛe thei haue his holy curſe
Sainct Benet with hem neuer met
But if thei thought to robbe his purſe
I can no moꝛe hereof tell
But thei been like tho befoꝛe
And cleane ſerue the deuill of hell
And been his treaſure and his ſtoꝛe.

And all ſoche other counterfaitours
Chanons, Canons, and ſoche diſgiſed
Been Goddes enemies and traitours
His true religion han foule diſpiſed
Of Freres I haue told befoꝛe
In a making of a Crede
And yet I could tell woꝛſe and moꝛe
But men would werien it to rede.

As Goddes goodnes no man tell might
Wꝛite ne ſpeake, ne thinke in thought
So her falſhed, and her vnright
Maie no man tell that euery God wꝛought
The Griffon ſaied, thou canſt no good
Thou came neuer of no gentill kinde
Other I tro we thou waxeſt wood
Oꝛ els thou haſt loſt thy minde.

Should holy churche haue no hedde?
Who ſhould be her gouernaile
Who ſhould her rule, who ſhould her redde
Who ſhould her foꝛthꝛen, who ſhould auaile
Eche man ſhall liue by his trauaile
Who beſt doeth, ſhall haue moſte mede
With ſtrength if men the churche aſſaile
With ſtrength men muſt defende her nede.

And the Pope were purely pooꝛe
Nedy, and nothing ne had
He ſhould be driuen from dooꝛe to dooꝛe
The wicked of him nolde not be dꝛad
Of ſoche an hedde men would be ſade
And ſinfully liuen as hem luſt
With ſtrength, amendes ſoche be made
With wepen Wolues from ſhepe be wuſt.

If the Pope and pꝛelates would
So begge, and bid, bowe and bꝛowe
Holy churche ſhould ſtande full cold
Her ſeruauntes fit and ſoupe ſoꝛowe
And thei wer noughtie foule and hoꝛowe
To woꝛſhip God men would wlate
Bothe on euen and on moꝛowe
Soche harlotrie men would hate.

Therfoꝛe men of holy churche
Should be honeſt in all thing
Woꝛſhipfull Gods woꝛkes werche
So ſemeth it to ſerue Chꝛiſt her king
In honeſt and in cleane clothing
With veſſels of gold and clothes riche
To God honeſtly to make offring
To his Loꝛdſhip none is liche.

The Pellican caſt an houge crie
And ſaied alas, why ſaieſt thou ſo
Chꝛiſt is our hedde that ſitteth on hie
Heddes ne ought we haue no mo
We been his membꝛes bothe alſo
And father he taught vs to call him als
Maiſters to be called defended he tho
All other maiſters been wicked and fals.

That taketh maiſtrie in his name
Ghoſtly, and foꝛ yearthly good
Kinges and loꝛdes ſhould loꝛdſhip haue
And rule the people with milde mode
Chꝛiſt foꝛ vs that ſhed his blood
Bad his pꝛieſtes no maſterſhip haue
Ne carke not foꝛ clothe ne food
From euery miſchiefe he will him ſaue.

Her riche clothing ſhall be right wiſneſſe
Her treaſure, true life ſhall be
Charite ſhall be her richeſſe
Her Loꝛdſhip ſhall be vnite
Hope in God, her honeſte
Her veſſell cleane conſcience
Pooꝛe in ſpirite, and humilite
Shall be holy churches defence.

What ſaied the Griffon maie thee greue
That other folkes faren wele
What haſt thou to doen with her liue
Thy falſhed eche man maie fele
Foꝛ thou canſt no cattell gete
But liueſt in londe as a loꝛell
With gloſing getteſt thou thy mete

So

So fareth the deuill that wonneth in hell.

Ye would that eche mā there should dwell
For he liueth in cleane enuie
So with the tales that thou doest tell
Thou wouldest other people destrie
With your glose, and your heresie
For ye can liue no better life
But clene in Hypocrisie
And bringest thee in wo and strife.

And therwith haue not to doen
For ye ne haue here no cure
ye serue the deuill, neither God ne man
And he shall paie you your hire
For ye woll fare well at feastes
And warme clothed for the cold
Therfore ye glose Goddes heestes
And begile the people yong and old.

And all the seuen Sacramentes
ye speake ayenst, as ye were slie
Ayenst tithinges, offringes w your ententes
And on our Lordes body falsely lie
And all this ye doen to liue in ease
As who saieth, there been none soche
And sain the Pope is not worth a peese
To make the people ayen him groche.

And this commeth in by kendes
To bring the christen in distaunce
For thei would that no man were frendes
Leaue thy chattring with mischaunce
If thou liue well, what wilt thou more
Let other men liue as hem list
Spende in good, or kepe in store
Other mennes conscience neuer thou nist.

Ye han no cure to answere fore
What meddle ye, that han not to doen
Let men liue as thei han doen yore
For thou shalt answere for no man
The Pellican saied, sir, naie
I dispised not the Pope
Ne no Sacrament, sothe to saie
But speake in charite and good hope.

But I dispise her hie pride
Her richesse, that should be poore in spirite
Her wickednesse is knowe so wide
Thei serue God in false habite
And tournen mekenesse into pride
And lowlinesse into hie degre
And Goddes wordes tourne and hide
And that am I moued by charite.

To let men to liue so
With all my conning and all my might
And to warne men of her wo
And to tellen hem trouth and right
The Sacramentes be soule heale
If thei been vsed in good vse
Ayenst that speake I neuer a deale
For than were I nothing wise

But thei that vsen him in misse manere
Or set hem vp to any sale
I trowe thei shall abie hem dere
This is my reason, this is my tale
Who so taketh hem vnrightfulliche
Ayenst the ten commaundementes
Or by glose wrecched liche
Selleth any of the Sacramentes.

I trowe thei doe the deuill homage
In that thei weten thei doe wrong
And thereto I dare well wage
Thei serue Sathan for all her song
To tithen and offren is holsome life
So it be doen in due manere
A man to houselin and to shriue
Wedding, and all the other in fere.

So it be nother solde ne bought
Ne take ne giue for couetise
And it be so taken it is nought
Who selleth hem so, maie sore agrise
On our lordes body I doe not lie
I saie soth through true rede
His flesche and blood through his misterie
Is there, in the forme of brede.

How it is there, it nedeth not striue
whether it be subget or accident
But as Christ was, whan he was on liue
So is he there verament
If Pope or Cardinall liue good liue
As Christ commaunded in his Gospell
Ayenst that woll I not striue
But me thinketh thei liue not well.

For if the Pope liued as God bedde
Pride and highnesse he should dispise
Richesse, couetise, and croune on hedde
Mekenesse and pouerte he should vse
The Grifton saied he should abie
Thou shall be brent in balefull fire
And all thy sect I shall distrie
ye shall be hanged by the swire.

ye shullen be hanged and to drawe

who

Who giueth you leaue for to preache
Or speake against Goddes lawe
And the people thus falsely teache
Thou shalt be cursed with booke and bell
And dissenered from holie churche
And cleane idampned into hell
Otherwise but ye woll worche.

The Pellican saied that I ne drede
Your curling is of little value
Of God I hope to haue my mede
For it is falshed that ye shewe
For ye been out of charite
And wilneth vengeaunce, as did Nero
To suffren I woll redy be
I drede not that thou canst do.

Christ bad ones suffre for his loue
And so he taught all his seruauntes
And but thou amende for his sake aboue
I drede not all thy maintenaunce
For if I drede the worldes hate
Me thinketh I were little to praise
I drede nothing your hie estate
Ne I drede not your disease.

Woll ye tourne and leaue your pride
Your hie porte, and your richesse
Your curling should not go so wide
God bring you into right wilenesse
For I drede not your tirannie
For nothing that ye can doen
To suffre I am all redie
Siker I recke neuer how sone.

The Griffon grinned as he were wood
And looked louely as an Owle
And swore by cokes harte blood
He would him teare euery doule
Holy churche thou disclaundrest foule
For thy reasons I woll thee all to race
And make thy flesche to rote and moule
Losell, thou shalt haue hard grace.

The Griffon flewe forth on his waie
The Pellican did sit and wepe
And to himself he gan saie
God would that any of Christes shepe
Had heard, and itake kepe
Eche a worde that here saied was
And would it write and well it kepe
God would it were all for his grace.

Plowman.

I answerd, and saied I would
If for my trauaile any man would pey

Pellican. He saied yes, these ȳ God han sold
For thei han store of money
Plowman. I saied, tell me and thou mate
Why tellest thou mennes trespace?
Pellican. He said, to amende hem in good fay
If God woll giue me any grace

For Christ himself is likened to me
That for his people died on Rood
As fare I, right so fareth he
He fedeth his birdes with his blood
But these doen euill ayenst good
And been his foen vnder frendes face
I told hem how her liuing stood
God amende hem for his grace.

Plowman.

What aileth the Griffon, tell why
That he holdeth on the other side
For thei twoo been likely
And with kindes roben wide
Pellican. The foule betokeneth pride
As Lucifer, that high flewe was
And sith he did him in euill hide
For he agilted Goddes grace.

As birde flieth vp in the aire
And liueth by birdes that been meke
So these been flowe vp into dispaire
And shenden sely soules eke
The soules that been in sinnes seke
He culleth hem, knele therfore alas
For bribrie Goddes forbode breke
God amende it for his grace.

The hinder parte is a Lion
A robber and a rauiner
That robbeth the people in yearth doune
And in yearth holdeth none his pere
So fareth this foule bothe ferre and nere
And with temporell strēgth the people chase
As a Lion proude in yearth here
God amende hem for his grace.

Pellican.

He flewe forth with his winges twain
All drouping, dased, and dull
But sone the Griffon came again
Of his soules the yearth was full
The Pellican he had cast to pull
So greate a nomber neuer seen there was
What maner of soules tellen I woll
If God woll giue me of his grace.

With the Griffon comen soules fele
Rauins, Rokes, Crowes, and Pie
Graie soules, agadred wele

I gurde aboue they would hie
Gledes and bosardes weren hem by
White molles and puttockes token her place
And lapwinges, that wel conneth lie
This felowship han for gerde her grace

Long the Pellican was oute
But at last he commeth againe
And brought with him the Phenix stoute
The Griffon would haue flow ful faine
His foules that flewen as thicke as raine
The Phenix tho began hem chace
To flie from him it was in vaine
For he did vengeaunce and no grace

He slewe hem doune without mercy
There astarte neither free ne thrall
On him they cast a rufull crie
When the Griffon doun was fall
He bete him not, but slewe hem all
Whyther he hem droue no man may trace
Under the erth me thought they yall
Alas they had a feble grace

The Pellican then axed right
For my writing if I haue blame
Who wol for me fight of flight?
Who shal sheld me from shame
He that had a maide to dame
And the lambe that slaine was
Shal sheld me from gostly blame
For erthely harme is goddes grace

Therfore I pray euery man
Of my writing haue me excused
This writing writeth the Pellican
That thus these people hath dispised
For I am freshe fully aduised
I nill not mainteine his manace
For the Deuill is often disguised
To bring a man to euil grace

Witeth the Pellican and not me
For herof I nil not auowe
In hie ne in lowe, ne in no degre
But as a fable take it ye mowe
To holy churche I will me bowe
Eche man to amende him Christe sende space
And for my writing me alowe
He that is almighty for his grace.

Here endeth the Plowmans tale, and hereafter foloweth the Parsons prologue.

By that the Ploweman had his tale ended
The sunne fro the southe side is discended
So lowe, that it was nat to my sight
Degrees of fiue and twenty on hight
Tenne at clocke it was, so as I gesse,
For enleuen fote, a litel more or lesse
My shadowe was at that time, as there
Of suche fete as my length parted were
In sixe fete equallie of proporcion
Therwith the moones exaltacion
I mene Libra, alway gan ascende
As we were entring at the thropes ende
For which our Hoste, as he was wont to gie
Aye in this case, this ioly companie
Said in this wise, lordinges euerichone
Now lacketh vs no tale more than one
Fulfilled is my sentence and my decre
Who wol now tel a tale let se
Almoste fulfilled is my ordinaunce
I pray to God so yeue him right good chaũce
That telleth this tale to vs lustely
Sir priest (q̃ he) arte thou a vicary
Or art thou a parson, say soth by thy fay
Be what thou be, breke thou not our play
For euery man saue thou, hath tolde his tale
Unbokell, and shewe vs what is in thy male
For trewely me thinketh by thy chere
Thou shouldest knit vp well a great matere
Tel vs a fable anon, for cockes bones
This Person him answerde al at ones
Thou gettest fable none tolde of me
For Poule, that writeth to Timothe
Repreueth hem that waiuen sothfastnesse
And teachen fables, and suche wretchednesse
Why shoulde I sowe draffe out of my fiste
Whan I may sowe whete, if that my list
For whiche I saye, if that ye list to here
Moralite, and of vertuous matere
And than, if ye wol yeue me audience
I would ful faine at Christes reuerence
Done you pleasaunce leful, as I can
But trusteth wel, I am a sotherne man
I can not ieste, rum, ram, ruf, by letter
And God wote, rime holde I but litle better
And therfore if ye list, I wol not glose
I wol you tell a litel tale in prose
To knit vp all this feest, and make an ende
And Jesu for his grace, wit me sende
To shewe you the way, in this voyage
Of thilke perfite gloriouse pilgrimage
That hight Hierusalem celestiall
And if you vouchesaue, anon I shall

The Parsons tale.

Begin vpon my tale, for whiche I pray
Tel your aduise, I can not better say
But natheleſſe this meditacion
I put it aye, vnder the correccion
Of clerkes, for I am not textuell
I take but the ſentence, truſteth well
Therfore I make protestacion
That I woll stande to correccion.
Upon this worde, we haue assented ſone
For as it ſemed, it was for to done
To ende in ſome vertuous ſentence
And for to yeue him ſpace and audience
And bade our Hoſte he ſhould to him ſay
That al we, to tel his tale him pray
Our Hoſte had the wordes for vs all
Sir preſt (q he) now fayre mote you befall
Say that what ye liſte, & we ſhall gladly here
And with worde he ſaide in this manere
Telleth (q he) your meditacion
But haſteth you, the ſunne wol a doun
Beth fructuous, and that in litel ſpace
And to do wel, God ſend you his grace.

Here endeth the Parſons prologue, and hereafter foloweth his tale.

Ieremi. vi. State ſuper vias, et videte, et interogate de ſemitis antiquis, que ſit via bona, & ambulate in ea: et inuenietis refrigerium animabus veſtris.

Our ſwete lorde God of heuen, that no man woll peryſhe, but woll that we turne all to the knowlege of him, and to the bliſſull life that is perdurable, amoneſheth vs by the prophete Jeremie, that ſaith in this wiſe. Stondeth vpon the wayes and ſeeth, and aſketh of olde pathes: that is to ſaye, of olde ſentences, whiche is the good waie, and walketh in that waye, and ye ſhall finde refreſhing for your ſoules. &c. Manie been the waies eſpirituelles that lede folke to our lorde Jeſu Chriſt, and to the reigne of glory: Of whiche waies there is a full noble waye, and full conuenable, whiche maye not faile to man ne to woman, that through ſinne hath miſgone fro the right way of Hieruſalem celeſtiall: and this waye is called penitence, of whiche man ſhould gladly herken and enquire with al his hert, to wete what is penitence, and whiche is called penitēce, and howe many maners bene of actions or werkinges of penitence, and howe many ſpeces there ben of penitence, and which thinges apertaine and behoue to penitence, and which thinges diſtourbe penitence.

Saint Ambroſe ſaith, that penitence is the plaining of manne for the gilte that he hath doen, and no moze to do any thing for which him oughte to playne. And ſome doctours ſaith, Penitence is the waimentinge of man that ſorowеth for his ſinne, and paineth him ſelfe, for he hath miſdon. Penitence with certaine circumſtaunces, is very repentaunce of a man that holte himſelf in ſorow, and other payne for his giltes: and for he ſhall be verie penitent, he ſhall firſt bewaile ſinnes that he hath done, and ſtedfaſtly purpoſe in his hert to haue ſhrifte of mouthe, and to do ſatiſfaction, and neuer to doe thing, for whiche him ought moze bewayle or complaine, and continewe in good workes: or els his repentaūce may not auaile. For as ſaint Iſoder ſaieth. He is a iaper and a lier, and no very repentaunt, that eftſone doth thing, for which him ought repente. Weping and not for to ſtinte to do ſinne, maye not auaile: But natheleſſe men ſhall hope that at euery time that man falleth, be it neuer ſo ofte, that he may ariſe through penaunce, if he haue grace: but certaine it is great doute, for as ſaieth S. Gregorie. Unnethes ariſeth out of ſinne, that is charged with the charge of euill vſage. And therefore repentaunt folke, that ſtinte for to ſinne, and leue ſinne or ſinne leue them, holy Church holdeth them ſiker of their ſaluaciō. And he that ſinneth, and verely repenteth him in his laſt ende: holy churche yet hopeth his ſaluacion, by the great mercy of our lorde Jeſu Chriſte, for his repentaunce: but take the ſiker waye.

And nowe ſith I haue declared you, what thing is Penitence, now ye ſhal vnderſtonde, that there been three actions of Penitence. The firſte is, that a manne be baptiſed after that he hath ſinned. Saint Auguſtin ſaieth, but he be penitent for his olde ſinfull life, he may not beginne the newe clene life: For certes if he be baptiſed without penitence of his olde gilt, he retaineth the marke of baptime, but not the grace ne the remiſſion of his ſinnes, till he haue very repentaunce. An other defaute is this, that men doe deedly ſinne after that they haue receyued baptiſme. The thirde defaute is this, that men fall in veniall ſinnes after her baptiſme, fro day to day.

Thereof

therof saith saint Augustin, that penitence of good and humble folke, is the penitence of euery daie.

The speces of penitence ben thre: That one of hem is solempne: an other is cõmune, and the thirde is priuy. That penaunce that is solempne is in two maners: As to be put out of holy churche in lent, for slaughter of children, and suche maner thinge. An other is when a man hath sinned openlye, of whiche sinne the fame is openly spoken in the countrie: and than holy churche by iudgement, distraineth him for to do open penaunce.

Cõmen penaunce is, that preestes enioyne men in certaine case: as for to go perauẽture naked in pilgrimage, or bare fote. Priuy penaunce is that, that men do all daie for priuy sinnes, of whiche we shriue vs priuely, and receiue priuy penaunce.

Now wolt thou vnderstond, what is behouefull and necessary to very perfite penitence: and this stonte on thre thinges. Contricion of herte, confession of mouthe, and satisfaccion. For whiche saieth saint Johan Chrisostom. Penitence distraineth a man to accept benignely euery paine, that him is enioyned, with contricion of hert, and shrifte of mouthe, with satisfaction: and in werking of al maner humilite. And this is fruitfull penitence ayenste thre thinges, in whiche we wrathe our lorde Jesu Christ: this is to saye, By delite in thinkinge by retcheleſſe in speking, and by wicked sinnefull werking. And ayenst these wicked giltes is penitence, that maie be likened vnto a tree.

The rote of this tree is contricion, that hideth him in the herte of him that is very repentaunt, right as the rote of the tree hideth him in the earth. Of this roote of contricion springeth a stalke, that bereth braũches and leues of confession, and fruite of satisfaccion. For whiche Christ saith in his gospell. Doth digne fruite of penitence, for by this fruite men may knowe the tree, and not by the rote that is hid in the herte of manne, ne by the braunches, ne the leues of confession. And therefore our lord Jesu Christ saith thus: By the fruite of hem shal ye knowe hem. Of this roote also springeth a sede of grace, the which sede is mother of al sikernesse, and this sede is eiger & hote. The grace of this sede springeth of God thrugh remembraunce on the daye of dome, and on the paines of hell. Of this matter saieth Salomon, that in the drede of god, man forleteth his sin. The heate of this sede is the loue of God, and the desiring of the ioy perdurable: This heate draweth the hert of man to god, and doth him hate his sinne: For sothely there is nothing that sauoureth so wel to a childe, as the milke of his nourice, ne nothinge is to him more abhominable than that milke, whan it is medled with other meate. Right so the sinfull man that loueth his sinne, him semeth that it is to him mosse swete of any thinge, but fro that time he loueth sadly our lord Jesu Christ, and desireth the life perdurable, there is to him no thing more abhominable: For sothely the lawe of God is the loue of God. For which Dauid the prophete saieth: I haue loued thy lawe, and hated wickednesse: He that loueth God, kepeth his lawe and his worde.

This tre sawe the prophete Daniel in spirite, on the vision of Nabuchodonosor, whan he counsailed him to do penitence. Penaunce is the tree of life, to hem that it receyue, and he that holdeth him in very penitence is blessed after the sentence of Salomon. In this penitence or cõtricion, man shall vnderstonde foure thinges, that is to say: What is contricion, and whiche ben the causes that moue a man to contricion, and how he shulde be contrite, and what contricion auaileth to the soule. Than is it thus, that contricion is the very sorow, that a man receiueth in his hert for his sinnes, with sadde purpose to shriue him, and to do penaunce, and neuer more to doe sinne: And this sorowe shal be in this maner, as saieth saint Bernard: It shal be heuie and greuouse, and full sharpe and poinaunte in herte.

First, for a man hath agilted his lorde and his creatoure, and more sharpe and poinaũt, for he hath agilted his father celestiall: And yet more sharpe and poynaunt, for he hath wrathed and agilted him that boughte him, that with his precious bloode hath deliuered vs fro the bondes of sinne, and fro the cruelte of the diuel, and fro the paines of hell.

The causes that ought moue a man to contricion bene fire. First a man shall remembre him of his sinnes, but loke that that remembraunce ne be to him no delite, by no waye, but greate shame and sorowe for his sinnes. For Job saith, sinfull men done workes worthy of confession. And therefore saieth Ezechiell: I wol remembre me al the yeres of my life, in the bitternesse of my herte. And God saieth in the Apocalipse: Remembre ye from whence that ye ben fall, for before that time

that ye sinned, ye were children of God, and limmes of the reigne of God: But for your sin ye ben waren thrall and foule, and membres of the fende: hate of angels, slaunder of holye churche, and foode of the false serpent, perpetual mattere of the fyre of hell: And yet more foule and abhominable, for ye trespace so oft times, as doeth an hounde that returneth ayen to eete his owne spewing: and yet be ye fouler, for your long continuing in sin, and your sinful vsage, for whiche ye be roted in your sinne, as a beeste in his donge. Suche maner of thoughtes make a manne to haue shame of his sin, and no delite. As God saith, by the prophete Ezechiel: ye shall remembre you of your waies, and they shull displese you sothly. Sinnes ben the waies that lede folke to Hell.

The seconde cause that ought make a mā to haue disdaine of sinne is this, that as saith saint Peter: Who so doth sinne, is thrall of sinne, and sinne putteth a manne in great thraldome. And therefore saieth the prophete Ezechiell: I wente sorowful, in disdaine of my selfe. Certes wel ought a manne haue disdaine of sinne, and withdrawe him fro that thraldome and vilany. And lo, what saieth Seneke in this matter, he saith thus: Though I wiste, that neither god ne manne should neuer knowe it, yet would I haue disdaine for to do sinne. And the same Seneke also saieth: I am borne to greater thinge, than to be thral to my body, or for to make of my body a thrall. Ne a fouler thrall maye no man ne woman make of his bodie, than for to yeue his body to sinne, all were it the foulest churle, or the foulest woman that liueth, and leste of value, yet is he than more foule, and more in seruitude. Euer fro the higher degre that man falleth, the more is he thrall, and more to God and to the worlde vile and abhominable. O good God, wel oughte man haue greate disdaine of sin, sith that through sinne, there he was fre he is made bonde. And therefore saieth saint Augustin: If thou hast disdaine of thy seruaunt, if he offende or sinne, haue thou than disdaine that thou thy selfe shuldest do sinne. Take rewarde of thine owne valewe, that thou ne be to foule to thy selfe. Alas well ought they than haue disdaine to be seruauntes and thralles to sinne, and sore to be ashamed of them self, that god of his endeles goodnesse hathe sette in highe estate, or yeue hem witte, strength of bodye, heale, beutie, or prosperite, and bought hem fro the death with his hert blood, that thei so vnkindly, ayenst his gentilnesse, quite him so vilainously, to slaughter of her owne soules. O good God, ye women that been of greate beautie, remembreth you on the prouerbe of Salomon. He saieth he likeneth a faire woman, that is a foole of her bodie, to a ringe of gold that were worne on the groine of a sow: For right as a sowe wroteth in euery ordure so wroteth she her beaute in stinking ordure of sinne.

The thirde cause that ought meue a mā to contricion, is drede of the daye of dome, and of the horrible paines of hel. For as sainte Jerom saieth: At euery time that me remembreth of the daye of dome, I quake: For when I eate and drinke, or what so that I do, euer semeth me that the trompe sowneth in mine eare: Riseth ye vp that been deed, and cometh to the iudgement. O good God, muche ought a manne to drede suche a iudgement, there as we shall be all, as sainte Poule saieth, before the seate of oure Lorde Jesu Christ, where as he shal make a general congregacion, where as no man may be absent, for certes there auayleth none essoyne ne excusation, & not onely that our defautes shalbe iudged, but also that all our werkes shall openly be knowen. And as saieth saint Barnarde, there ne shall no pleding auaile, ne no sleight: We shall yeue rekeninge, of euery idle worde. There shall we haue a iudge that maie not be disceiued ne corrupt, and why? for certes, all our thoughtes ben discouered, as to him, ne for prayer ne for mede, he shall not be corrupte. And therfore saith Salomon: The wrathe of God ne wol not spare no wight, for prayer ne for yefte. And therefore at the daye of dome, there is no hope to escape. Wherfore, as saieth saint Anselm: ful great anguishe shall the sinnefull folke haue at that time: There shal the fiers and wrothe iudge sitte aboue, and vnder him the horrible pitte of hel open, to distroy him that must be knowe, his sinnes, which sinnes openly ben shewed before God and before euery creature: And on the lefte side, mo Diuels than anie herte maye thinke, for to hale and drawe the sinful soules to the paine of hell, and within the hertes of folke shall be the biting conscience, and without forth shal be the worlde al brēning: whither shal than the wretched sinfull man flie to hide him? Certes he may not

hide

hide him, he must come forth and shewe him. For certes, as saith S. Jerom, the earth shal cast him out of it and the see also, and the ayre that shal be ful of thonder clappes and lightninges. Now sothly, who so wel remembreth him of these thinges: I gesse that his sinne shall not turne him in delite, but to great sorowe, for drede of the paine of hell. And therfore saith Job to God: suffre lord, that I may a while bewaile and wepe, er I go without returning to the derke londe, couered with the derkenesse of death, to the londe of misese and of derkenesse, where as is the shadowe of death, where as there is none order or ordinaunce, but ferefull drede that euer shal last. Lo, here may you se, that Job praied respite a while, to bewepe and waile his trespase: for sothely one daye of respite is better than all the tresour of this world. And for as much as a man may acquite himself before god by penitence in this world, & not by tresour, therfore should he pray to god to yeue him respite a while, to bewepe and waile his trespace: for certes, al the sorowe that a man might make fro the beginning of the world, nis but a litel thing, at regarde of the sorowe of hell. The cause why that Job calleth hell the londe of derkenesse, vnderstondeth that he calleth it londe or erth, for it is stable and neuer shall faile, and derke: For he that is in hell hath defaute of light materiall, for certes the derke light that shal come out of the fire that euer shal brenne, shal turne him al to pain that is in hell, for it sheweth him to the horrible Diuels that him turmenteth, couered with the derknesse of death, that is to say, that he that is in hel, shal haue defaute of the sight of god: for certes the sight of god is the life perdurable. The derkenesse of death, been the sinnes that the wretched man hath don, which that disturbe him to se the face of god, right as the derke cloude betwixt vs and the sunne. Londe of misese, bicause that there ben thre maner of defautes ayenst thre thinges that folke of this worlde haue in this present life, that is to saie: honours, delices, and richesse. Ayenst honour haue they in hel shame and confusiō: For wel ye wote, that men call honour the reuerence that man doth to man, but in hell is none honour ne reuerēce. For certes, no more reuerence shalbe do ther to a kinge, than to a knaue. For whiche God saith by the Prophet Jeremy: Those folke that me dispise, shal be in dispite. Honoure is also called great lordship: there shall no wight serue other: but of harme and turment. Honoure is also called great dignite and highnesse, but in hell shall thei be al fortroden of diuelles. As God saith: the horrible diuels shall goe and come vpon the heedes of dampned folke: and this is, for as much as the higher that thei were in this present life, the more shal thei be abated and defoiled in hell. Ayenste the richesse of this world shal they haue misese of pouerte, that shal be in foure thinges. In defaute of tresoure. Of which Dauid saith: The riche folke that enbrace and knite al her herte to tresour of this worlde, shall slepe in the slepinge of death, and nothing ne shull they finde in her hondes of al her tresour. And more ouer the misease of hel shal be in defaute of meete and drinke. For God saith thus by Moyses: They shall be wasted with honger, and the brydes of hell shall deuour hem, with bitter death, and the gal of the dragon shall be her drinke, and the venim of the Dragon her morsels. Also her misease shall be in defaute of clothing, for thei shal be naked in body, as of clothing, saue the fire in whiche they brenne, and other filthes: and naked shall they be of soule, of al maner vertues, whiche that is the clothing of the soule. Where been than the gay robes, the soft sheetes, & the smal shertes? Lo, what saieth God of hem by the Prophet Isaie, ỹ vnder hem shal be strewed moughtes, and her couertures shal be of wormes of hell. Also her misease shalbe in defaute of frendes, for he is not pore that hath good frendes, but ther is no frende, for neither God ne no creature shall be frende to hem, and eche of hem shal hate other with dedly hate: The sonnes and the doughters shall rebell ayenst father and mother, and kinred ayenst kinred, chide and dispise eche other, bothe day and night, as God saieth by the prophet Micheas: And the louinge children that whilom loued so fleshly eche other, would eche of hem ete other if they might. For howe should they loue togither in the paines of hel, whan they hated eche other in prosperite of this life? for truste wel, her fleshly loue was deedly hate. As saith the prophet Dauid: Who so that loueth wickednesse, he hateth his soule, & who so hateth his owne soule, certes he may loue none other wight in no maner: And therfore in hel is no solace ne no frēdship, but euer the more kinredes that ben in hel, the more cursinges, the more chidinges, and the more deedly hate there is amonge hem. Also they shal haue defaute of all maner delices, for certes delices

ben after the appetites of the fiue wittes: As sight, hering, smellinge, sauouring, and touchinge. But in Hell her sight shall be full of derkenesse and of smoke, and therefore full of teares, and her heringe full of waylinge and grintinge of tethe: As saith Jesu Christ. Her nosthyrilles shal be full of stinking. And, as saith Isaie the prophete: Her sauouring shal be ful of bitter gall, and as touching of al her bodies, icouered with fire, that neuer shall quenche, and with wormes that neuer shall die. As God saith by the mouth of Isaie: and for as muche as they shal not wene that they may die for paine, and by death flie fro paine, that maye they vnderstonde in the wordes of Job, that saieth: There is the shadowe of death. Certes a shadowe hath likenesse of the thing of whiche it is shadowed, but shadowe is not ỹ same thing of whiche it is shadowed: right so fareth the paine of hel, it is like deth, for the horrible anguishe. And why? For it paineth hem euer as though they should die anon, but certes thei shal not die. For as saith saint Greg. to wretched caitifes shalbe death without deth, and ende without ende, and defaute with out failing, for her death shall alway liue, and her ende shal euer more begin, and her defaute shal not faile.

And therfore saieth saint John the Euangelist, they shal folowe deathe, and they shall nat finde him, and they shal desire to die, and death shal flie from him. And also Job saith, that in hel is no order or rule. And al be it so, that God hath create al thing in right order, and nothing without order, but all thinges ben ordred and numbred, yet natheles they that been dampned ben nothing in order, ne holde none order, for the erth ne shal bere hem no fruite. For, as the prophete Dauid saieth: God shall distroie the fruite of the erth, as for hem, ne water, ne shal yeue hem no moisture, ne the eyre no refreshinge, ne fire no lighte. For as saieth saint Basilie: The brenning of the fire of this world shal God yeue in hell to hem that ben dampned, but the light and the clerenesse shal be yeue in Heuen to his children: right as good men yeue flesh to her children, and bones to her houndes. And for they shall haue none hope to escape, saieth sainte Job at laste, that there shal errour and grelly drede dwell with out ende. Horrour is alway drede that is to come, and this drede shal alwaie dwell in the hertes of hem that bee dampned. And therfore haue thei losse all her hope for seuen causes. Firste for God that is her iudge shal be without mercy to hem, and they may not please him ne none of his sainctes, ne they maie not yeue nothinge for her raunsome, ne thei shal haue no voice to speke to him, ne they may not flie fro paine, ne they haue no goodnesse in hem that they maye shewe to deliuer hem fro paine. And therfore saieth Salomon: The wicked manne dieth, and whan he is deed, he shall haue no hope to escape fro paine. Who so than would wel vnderstonde the paines, and bethinke him well that he hath deserued those paines for his sinnes, certes he shoulde haue more talent to sighe and wepe, than for to singe and playe. For as saieth Salomon, who so that had the science to know the paines that ben ordained for sinne, he woulde make sorowe. That science, as saieth sainte Austin, maketh a man to weiment in his herte.

The fourth pointe that oughte make a man haue contricion, is the sorouful remembraunce of the good that he hath lefte to doe here in earthe, and also the good that he hath loste. Sothly the good werkes that he hath lefte, either they bee the good werkes that he wroughte er he fill in deedly sinne, or elles the good werkes ỹ he wrought while he laie in sin. Sothly the good werkes that he did before that he fill in sinne been al mortified, astoned, and dull by ofte sinninge. The werkes that he did while he lay in sinne be deed, as to the life perdurable in Heuen: than the good werkes that been mortified by oft sinning, whiche he did beyng in charite, may not quiche ayen without very penitẽce. And of it saieth God by the mouthe of Ezechiel: If the rightfull man returne ayen fro his right wisnesse and do wickednesse, shal he liue? nay: for al the good werkes that he hath do, ne shal neuer be in remembraunce, for he shall die in his sin. And vpõ that chapitre saieth saint Gregorie thus, that we shall vnderstond this principally: If that we don deedly sin, it is for nought than to reherce or drawe in to memory the good werkes that we haue wrought before: for certes in the werking of deedly sinne, there is no truste to no good werke that we haue doen before: that is to say, as for to haue thereby the life perdurable in Heuen. But natheless the good werkes quicken and come againe, and helpe and auaile to haue the life perdurable in Heuen whã we haue cõtricion: But sothly the good werkes that men don while they be in deedly

sinne,

sinne, for as moche as thei were doen in dedly sinne, thei maie neuer quiche: For certes, thing that neuer had life, maie neuer quiche: And natheleſſe, albeit that thei auaile not to haue the life perdurable, yet auaile thei to abredge of the pain of hell, or els to get temporell richeſſes, or els that God woll the rather enlumine or light the hart of the ſinful man to haue repentaunce, and eke thei auaile for to vſe a manne to doe good werkes, that the fende haue the leſſe power of his ſoulle. And thus the curteis Lorde Jeſu Chriſte, ne woll that no good werke bee loſte, for in ſom what it ſhall auaile. But for as moche as the good werkes that menne doen while thei been in good life, been all amortiſed by ſinne folowing: and alſo ſithe that all the good werkes that men doen while thei bee in dedly ſinne, been vtterly dedde, as for to haue the life perdurable, well maie that manne that no good werke ne dooeth, ſing that newe freſche ſong (Iay tout pardu mon temps, et mon labure). For certes ſinne bireueth a man bothe goodneſſe of nature, and alſo ỹ goodneſſe of grace. For ſothly the grace of the holy ghoſte, fareth like fire that maie not be idell, for fire faileth anon as it forleteth his werking: and right ſo grace faileth anon, as it forleteth his werking. Than leſeth the ſinfull man the goodneſſe of glory, that onely is behight to good men that labour and werke. Well maie he be ſorie than, that oweth all his life to God, as long as he hath liued, and alſo as long as he ſhall liue; that no goodneſſe ne hath to paie with his debt to God, to whom he oweth all his life: for truſt well he ſhall yeue accomptes as ſaieth ſainct Bernarde, of all the gooddes that haue been yeue him in this preſent life, and how he hath hem diſpended, in ſo moche that there ſhall not periſhe an heere of his hedde, ne a moment of an houre, ne ſhall not periſhe of his time, that he ne ſhall yeue of it a rekening.

The fifthe thinge that ought to moue a man to contricion, is remembraunce of the paſſion that our Lorde Jeſu Chriſt ſuffered for our ſinnes. For as ſaieth ſaincte Bernarde, while that I liue, I ſhall haue remembraunce of the trauailes, that our lorde Jeſu Chriſte ſuffred in preaching, his wearineſſe in trauailing, his temptacions whan he faſted, his long wakinges whan he praied his teres whan that he wept for pite of good people, the wo, the ſhame, and the filthe that menne ſaid to him: of the foule ſpitting that menne ſpitte in his face, of the buffettes that men yaue him: of the foule mowes and of the reproues that men ſaied to him: of the nailes with whiche he was nailed to the croſſe, and of all the rēnaunt of his paſſion, that he ſuffred for my ſinnes, and nothing for his gilte. And ye ſhall vnderſtande, that in mannes ſin is euery maner order or ordinaunce, tourned vp ſo doune. For it is ſothe, that God, reaſon, ſenſualite, and the bodie of man, been ordained, that eche of theſe fower thinges, ſhould haue Lordſhip ouer that other: as thus, God ſhould haue lordſhip ouer reaſon, and reaſon ouer ſenſualite, and ſenſualite ouer the body of man. But ſothly whan man ſinneth, all this order or ordinaūce, is turned vp ſo doun, And therfore than, for as moche as reaſon of man, ne woll not be ſubiecte ne obeiſaunt to God, that is his Lorde by right, therefore leſeth it the Lordſhip that it ſhould haue ouer ſenſualite, and alſo ouer the bodie of manne. And why? For ſenſualite rebelleth thā ayenſt reaſon: and by that waie leaſeth reaſon the lordſhip ouer ſenſualite, and ouer the bodie: For right as reaſon is rebell to God, right ſo is both ſenſualite rebell to reaſon, and to the body alſo? And certes this diſordinaunce and this rebellion, our Lorde Jeſu Chriſt bought vpon his precious body full deare: and herkeneth in what wiſe. For as moche than as reaſon is rebell to God, therfore is man worthy to haue ſorow, and to be dedde. This ſuffred our Lorde Jeſu Chriſte for manne, after that he had be betraied of his diſciple, and diſtrained and bounde, ſo that his blood braſte out, at euery naile of his hondes, as ſaith S. Auguſtin. And ferthermore, for as moche as reaſon of manne, woll not daunt ſenſualite, whan it maie, therfore is manne worthie to haue ſhame: and this ſuffred our Lorde Jeſu Chriſt for man, whan thei ſpit in his viſage. And ferthermore, for as moche than as the caitife body of man, is rebell both to reaſon & to ſēſualite, therfore it is worthy death, and this ſuffred our Lorde Jeſu Chriſte vpon the croſſe, where as there was no part of his bodie free, without greate pain and bitter paſſion: and al this ſuffred our lorde Jeſu Chriſt that neuer forfaited. And therefore reaſonably maie bee ſaied of Jeſu in this maner: To moche am I pained, for thinges that I neuer deſerued, and to moche defouled for ſham that manne is worthy to haue: And therfore maie the ſinfull man weil ſaie, as ſaieth S.

Bernarde. Accurſed bee the bitternesſe of my ſinne, for whiche there muſte bee ſuffered ſo moche bitternes. For certes, after the diuers diſcordaunce of our wickednes, was the paſſion of Jeſu Chriſte ordained in diuers thinges: as thus. Certes ſinfull mannes ſoule is betraied of the deuill, by couetiſe of temporel proſperite, and ſcorned by diſceite, whan that he cheſeth fleſhly delices, and yet it is turmẽted by impacience of aduerſite, and beſpet by ſeruage and ſubiection of ſinne, and at the laſt it is ſlain finally. For this diſordinaunce of ſinfull man, was Jeſu Chriſt firſt betraid, and after that was he bounde, that came for to vnbinde vs of ſinne and of paine. Than was he beſcorned, ꝑ onely ſhould haue be honoured in all thinges. Than was his viſage that ought bee deſired to bee ſeen of all mankind, in whiche viſage Angels deſire to loke, vilainouſly beſpet. Than was he ſcourged that nothing had treſpaſed, and finally, thã was he crucified and ſlain. Than was acompliſhed the woordes of Iſaie: He was wounded for our miſdeedes, and deſoiled for our felonies. Now ſithe that Jeſu Chriſt tooke on him the pain of all our wickednesſes, moche ought ſinfull manne wepe and bewaile, that for his ſinnes, Goddes ſonne of heuen ſhould all this pain endure.

THE firſt thing that ſhould meue a man to contricion, is the hope of three thinges, that is to ſaie: forgeuenesſe of ſin, and the yefte of grace for to doe well, and the gloꝛie of heauen, with whiche God ſhall reward manne for his good deedes: And for as moche as Jeſu Chriſt, yeueth vs theſe yeftes of his largeneſſe, and of his ſouerain bounte therfore is he called (Ieſus Nazarenus rex Iudeorum) Jeſus is to ſaie, ſauiour or ſaluacion, on whom men ſhal hope to haue forgeueneſſe of ſinnes, whiche that is properly ſaluacion of ſinnes. And therfore ſaied the Angell to Joſeph, thou ſhalte call his name Jeſus, that ſhall ſaue his people of her ſinnes. And hereof ſaieth ſainct Peter: There is none other name vnder heauen, that is yeue to any man, by whiche a man maie bee ſaued, but onely Jeſus. Nazarenus is as moche for to ſaie, as flouriſhing, in whiche a manne ſhall hope, that he that yeueth him remiſſion of ſinnes, ſhall yeue him alſo grace well for to doe. I was at the dooꝛe of thine harte, ſaith Jeſus, and called for to enter: he that openeth to me, ſhall haue forgeuenes of his ſinne. I woll entre into him by my grace, and ſuppe with him by the good werkes that he ſhall doe, whiche werkes been the foode of ꝑ ſoule, and ye ſhall ſuppe with me, by the great ioye that I ſhall yeue him. Thus ſhall man hope for his werkes of penaunce, that GOD ſhall yeue him his reign, as he behight him in the Goſpell. Now ſhal a manne vnderſtande, in whiche maner ſhall be his contricion: I ſaie, that it ſhall bee vniuerſall and totall, this is to ſaie: a man ſhall be very repentaunt, for al his ſinnes that he hath dooen in delite of his thought, for it is right perillous.

For there been twoo maner of conſentinges, that one of hem is called conſenting of affection, whan a man is moued to do ſinne, and than deliteth him long, for to thinke on that ſinne, & his reaſon appercciueth it wel, that it is ſinne ayenſt the Lawe of God, and yet his reaſon refraineth not his foule delite to talent, though he ſe well apertly, that it is ayenſt the reuerence of God, although his reſon conſent not, to do that ſinne in deede, yet ſaie ſome Doctours, that ſoche delite that dwelleth long is full perillous, albeit neuer ſo little. And alſo a man ſhould ſoꝛowe, namely for all that euer he hath deſired ayenſte the Lawe of God, with perfite conſenting of his reaſon, for thereof is no doubte, that it is dedly ſinne in conſenting: for certes there is no deadly ſinne, but that it is firſt in mannes thought, and after that in ꝑ delite, and ſo forth into conſenting, and into deede. Wherfore I ſaie that many men, ne repent hem neuer of ſoche thoughtes and delices, ne neuer ſhriue hem of it, but onely of ꝑ deede of greate ſinnes outward: wherfore, I ſaie that ſoche wicked delites been ſubtill begilers, of hem that ſhall be dampned.

Moꝛe ouer, man ought to ſoꝛowe for his wicked woꝛdes, as well as for his wicked dedes: for certes the repentaunce of a ſinguler ſinne, and not repentaunt of al his other ſinnes, oꝛ els repent him of all his other ſinnes, and not of a ſinguler ſinne, maie not anaile: for certes GOD almightie is all good, and therefoꝛe, either he forgeueth all, oꝛ els right nought. And therefoꝛe ſaieth ſainct Auguſtin: I wote certainly, that God is enemie to euery ſinner: and how thã he that obſerueth one ſinne, ſhall he haue forgeueneſſe of thoſe other ſinnes? Naie. And moꝛe ouer, contriciõ ſhould be wonder ſoꝛowfull and anguiſhous and therefoꝛe yeueth him GOD plainly his mercie: and therfoꝛe whan my ſoule was anguiſhed

guilshed, and sorowfull within me, than had I remēbraunce of god, that my praier might come to him. Ferthermore, contricion muste be continuall, and that manne haue stedfast purpose to shriue him, and to amende him of his life. For sothly while contricion lasteth, man maie euer hope to haue forgeuenes. And of this cometh hate of sinne, that distroieth bothe sinne in himself, and also in other folk at his power. For whiche saieth Dauid: thei that loue God hate wickednesse: For to loue GOD, is for to loue that he loueth, and hate that he hateth. The last thing that men shal understande is this, wherefore auaileth contricion? I saie, that contricion somtime deliuereth manne fro sinne: Of whiche Dauid saith, I saie (saied Dauid) I purposed fermely to shriue me, and thou forde releasedest my sinne. And right so as contricion, auaileth not without sad purpose of shrifte, if manne haue oportunite, right so litle worth is shrift or satisfaction without cōtricion. And more ouer contricion distroieth the prison of helle, and maketh weake and feable all the strengthes of the deuils, and restoreth the yeftes of the holy ghost, and of all good vertues, and it cleanseth the soule of sinne, and deliuereth it fro the pain of helle, and fro the companie of the Deuill, and fro the seruage of sinne, and restoreth it to all good spirituells, and to the companie and communion of holie churche. Ferthermore, it maketh him that whilom was soonne of Ire, to be the sonne of Grace: And all these thinges been proued by holie writte. And therefore, he that would set his entent to these thinges, he were full wise, for truely he ne should haue than in all his life corage to sinne, but yeue his harte and bodie to serue Christ, and thereof doe him homage. For truely our Lorde hath spared vs so mekely in our folies, that if he ne had pite of mannes soule, a sory song might we all sing.

Explicit prima pars penitentie: et incipit pars secunda.

THE seconde parte of penitence is Confession, that is signe of contriciō. Now shull ye vnderstonde what is confession, and it ought needes bee doen or no, and whiche thinges bee conuenable to very confession.

First shalt thou vnderstande, that confession is verie shewing of sinnes to the Priest: this is to saie very, for he muste confesse him of all the cōdicions that belong to his sinne, as ferforthe as he can: all must bee saied, and nothing excused ne hid, and not auaunt thee of thy good werkes. Also it is necessarie to vnderstande whens that sinnes spring, and how thei entre, and whiche thei been.

Of the spring of sinnes, saith S. Poule in this wise: that right as by one man sinne entred first into this worlde, and through sinne death, right so the death entreth into al men that sinne, and this man was Adam, by whō sinne entred into this world, whan he brake the commaundement of God. And therefore he that first was so mightie, that he ne shuld haue died, became so that he muste nedes die, whether he would or no, and all his progeny in this worde, that in the saied man sinned. Looke that in the estate of innocencie, whan Adam and Eue were naked in Paradise, and shamed not thereof, how the serpente, wiliest of all other beastes that GOD made, saied to the woman: why cōmaunded God you, that ye should not eate of euery tree in Paradise? The woman answered: of the fruict saied she of trees of Paradise we feede vs, but of the fruict of the middle tree of Paradise, God forbode vs to eate and touche, lest we should die. The serpente saied to the woman: naie naie, ye shall not die of death, for sothe God wotte that what daie that ye eate therof your yen shall open, and ye shall be as Gods knowing good and harme. The woman thā sawe that the tree was good to feading, and faire to the yen, and delectable to sight, she toohe of the fruite of the tree and eate, & yaue to her husbande, and he eate, and anon the yen of hem both opened: and whan that thei knewe that thei were naked: thei sowed of figge leues in maner of breches, to hide her mēbers. There maie ye se that dedly sin hath first suggestiō of the fende, as sheweth here by the Adder, & afterwarde the delite of the flesh, as sheweth by Eue, & after that, consenting of reason, as sheweth here by Adam. For trust wel though so it were, that the fende tempted Eue, that is to saie, the flesshe, and the flesshe had delite in the beautie of the fruicte defended, yet certes till that reason, that is to saie Adam, consented to the eating of the fruict, yet stoode he in the state of innocencie. Of the saied Adā tohe we the saied originall sinne, for of him fleshly discended bee wee all, and engendered of vile and corrupt mattere: And whan the soule is

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put in our bodies, right anon is contract originall sinne, and that that was erst, but onely pain of concupiscence, is afterward bothe paine and sinne, & therfore we been all borne sonnes of wrath, and of dampnacion perdurable, if it nere Baptisme that wee receiue, which benimmeth vs the coulpe, but forsoth the pine dwelleth with vs as to temptacion, whiche pine highte concupiscence. This concupiscence whan it is wrongfully disposed or ordained in man, it maketh him coueite by couetise of flesche, fleshely sinne by sight of his yen, as to yerthly thinges, and also couetise of highnes by pride of harte.

Now as to speake of the first couetise, that is concupiscence, after the lawe of our members, that were lawfully made, and by rightfull iudgement of God, I saie, for asmoche as manne is not obeissaunt to God, that is his Lorde, therefore is the fleasche to him disobeissaunt through concupiscence, whiche is called nourisching of sinne, and occasiō of sinne. Therefore, all the while that a manne hath within him, the pine of concupiscence, it is impossible, but he be tempted somtime, & moued in his flesche to sin. And this thing maie not faile, as long as he liueth. It maie well were feble by vertue of Baptisme, and by the grace of God through penitence, but fully ne shall it neuer quenche that, he ne shall sometime bee moued in himself, but if he were all refrained by sickneſſe, or by malice of sorcerie or cold drinkes. For lo, what saieth S. Poule: the flesche coueteth ayenst the spirite, and the spirite against the flesche: thei been so contrarie and so striuen: that a manne maie nat alwaie dooe as he would. Thesame S. Poule, after his greate Penaunce, in water and in lond: in water by night and by daie, in great peril, and in great pain. In lond, famine and thurst, cold and clothlesse, and ones stoned almoosse to death. Yet (saied he) alas, I caitife man, who shall deliuer me fro the prisone of my caitife bodie? And sainct Jerom, whan he long time had dwelled in desert, where as he had no company but of wilde beastes, where as he had no meate, but herbes, and water to drinke, ne no bed, but the naked yerth, wherfore his fleasche was blacke, as an Ethiopien for heate, and nie destroied for cold. Yet (saied he) that the brenning of lecherie boiled in all his bodie. Wherefore I wot well that thei be disceiued that saie, thei be nat tempted in her bodies. Witnesse sainct James that saieth, that euery wight is tempted in his own concience, that is to saie: That eche of vs hath matter and occasion, to be tempted of the norisching of sinne, that is in his body. And therfore saieth sainct Jhon the Euangelist: if we saie that we been without sinne, we deceiue our self, and truthe is not in vs. Now shal ye vnderstonde, how sinne wexeth and encreaseth in man. The first thing is thesame nourisching of sinne, of which I spake before, the fleshely concupiscence, and after that cometh suggestion of the deuill, this is to saie, the deuils belous, with which he bloweth in man, the fire of concupiscence, & after that a man bethinketh him whether he woll dooe or no, that thing to whiche he is tempted. And thā if a man withstonde and weiue, the first entising of his fleasche, and of the fende, than it is no sinne, and if so be he doe not, than fealeth he anon a flame of delite, and than it is good to beware and kepe him well, or els he wolle fall anone to consenting of sinne, and than woll he do it, if he maie haue time and place. And of this matter saieth Moses by the Deuill, in this maner: The fende saieth, I woll chace and pursue man by wicked suggestion, and I woll take him by mouing and stering of sinne, and I woll departe my prise of my praie by deliberacion, and my lust shall be accomplished in delite, I woll draw my swerd in consenting. For certes, right as a swerde departeth a thing in two peces, right so consenting departeth God fro manne, and than wolle I slea him with my honde in deede of sinne: thus saieth the fende. For certes, than is a man all dedde in soule, and thus is sinne accomplished with temptacion, by delite and cōsenting: and than is the sinne actuell. Forsoth sinne is in two maners, either it is veniall or dedly sinne. Sothly whan man loueth any creature, more thā Jesu Christ our creatour, than it is dedly sinne, and veniall sinne it is, if man loue Jesu Christe lesse than him ought. Forsoth the deede of this venial sinne is full perillous, for it minisheth ỹ loue that man should haue to God more and more. And therfore if a man charge himself, with many soche veniall sinnes: certes but if so bee that he somtime discharge him of hem by shrifte. Thei maie full lightly minishe in him, al the loue that he hath to Jesu Christ, and in this wise skippeth veniall sinne, into dedly sinne. For certes, the more that a man chargeth his soule with veniall sinnes, the more he is enclined to fall into dedly sinne. And therefore let vs not be negligent, to charge vs of veni-

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all sinnes. For the Prouerbe saieth, that many small make a greate. Herken this ensample. A greate waue of the sea cometh, sometime with so gret a violēce, that it drowneth the shippe. And thesame harme doeth sometime the smal droppes of water, that entreth through a little creueis, into the timber, and into the botome of the shippe, if men be so negligēt, that thei discharge hem not by times. And therfore although there be a difference betwixt these two causes of drouning, algates the shippe is drouned. Righte so fareth it sometime of deadly sinne, and of anoious veniall sinnes, whan thei multiplie in man so greatly, that those worldly thinges that he loueth, through whiche he sinneth venially, is as greate in his hart as the loue of God, or more: and therfore the loue of euery thing, is not beset in God, ne doen principally for goddes sake, although that a manne loue it lesse than God, yet is it veniall sinne, and deadlie sinne whan the loue of any thing, weieth in the hart of man, as moche as the loue of God or more. Dedly sinne as saieth sainct Augustine, is whan a man tourneth his harte fro God, whiche that is very soueraine bountie, that maie not chaunge, and yeueth his hart to thing that maie chaunge and flit: and certes, that is euery thing saue God of heauen. For soth is that, if a mā yeue his loue, which that he oweth to God with all his harte, vnto a creature, certes, as moche of loue as he yeueth to the same creature, so moche he bireueth fro God, and therefore doeth he sinne: For he that is debtour to God, ne yeldeth not to God al his debt, that is to saie, all the loue of his harte. Now sith manne vnderstandeth generally, whiche is veniall sinne, than it is couenable to tell specially of sinne, whiche that many a man perauenture, demeth hem no sinnes, and shriueth him not of the same thinges, and yet natheles thei be sinnes soth ly, as these clerkes write, this is to saie: At euery time that manne eateth and drinketh, more than suffiseth to ỹ sustenance of his body, in certaine he doeth sinne: and also whan he speaketh more than it nedeth, it is sinne.

Also whan he herkeneth not benignely the complainte of the poore: Also whan he is in heale of body, and woll not fast whan other folke fast, without cause resonable: also whā he slepeth more than neadeth, or whan he cometh perchaunce to late to Churche, or to other werkes of charite: Also whan he vseth his wife without soueraine desire of engendure, to the honour of God, or for the entent to yelde to his wife debte of his bodye. Also whan he wol not visite the sick, or the prisoner, if he may. Also if he loue wife or child, or other worldly thing, more than reson requireth. Also if he flatter or blandise more, than him ought for any necessite. Also if he minish or withdrawe the almose of the poore. Also, if he apparaile his meat more dilicously thā nede is, or eate to hastely by likorousnes. Also, if he talke vanities at churche, or at Goddes seruice, or that he be a talker of idle wordes of folie or vilanie, for he shall yelde accōptes of it at the daie of dome. Also, whan he behighteth or assureth to dooe thinges, that he maie not performe. Also, whan that he by lightnesse of foly, missaieth or scorneth his neighbour. Also, whan he hath any wicked suspeccion of thing, that he ne wote of sothfastnesse. These thinges and mo without nōber be sinnes, as saieth S. Augustine. Now shall men vnderstonde, that all bee it so that man yearthly manne maie eschue all veniall sinnes, yet maie he refrain him, by the brenning loue ỹ he hath to our lorde Jesu Christ, and by praiers and confession, and other good workes, so that it shall be but little grief. For as saith S. Augustin. If a man loue God in sochemaner, that all that euer he doth is the loue of God, or for the loue of God verely, for he brenneth in the loue of GOD: looke how moche that one drop of water, whiche doeth fall into a great fourneis full of fire, anoieth or greueth the brēning of the fire: in like maner anoieth or greueth a veniall sinne, vnto that manne, whiche is stedfast and perfite, in the loue of our sauiour Jesu Christ. Ferthermore, men maie also refraine and put awaie veniall sinne, by commoning and receiuing worthely, the body of our sauior Jesu Christ. Also, by taking of holy water, by almose dede by general confession of Confiteor at Masse, and at Complin, and by blessing of Bishops and priestes, and by other good workes.

De septem peccatis mortalibus, & de eorum dependetiis circumstantiis, & speciebus.

Now it is expediente to tell, whiche been the seuen dedly sinnes, that is to saie, chiefteins of sinnes. Al thei ren in o lees, but in diuers maners Now been thei called seuen Cenes, for as moche as thei be chiefe, and springe of all o-

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ther sinnes. Of the roote of these seuen sinnes, than is Pride the generall roote of all harmes. For of this roote springeth certain braunches: as Ire, Enuie, Accidie or Sloth, Auarice or Couetise, to common vnderstonding, Glotonie and lecherie: and eche of these chief sinnes, haue her braunches and twigges, as it shall bee declared in her chapiters folowing. And though so be, that no manne can vtterly tell the nomber of twigges, and of the harmes that come of Pride. yet woll I shewe a part of hem, as ye shall vnderstonde. There is inobedience, auaunting, ipocrisie, dispite, errogance, impedēce, swelling of hart insolence, elacion, impacience, strief, contumacie, presumpcion, irreuerence, pertinacie, vaingiorie, and many other twigges that I can not declare. Inobedience, is he that disobeieth for dispite, the commaundementes of God, to his soueraines, and to his ghostly father. Auaunter, is he ȳ bosteth of the harme or of the bounte that he hath doen. Ipocrite is he that hideth to shewe him soche as he is, and sheweth him to seme soche as he is nat. Dispitous, is he ȳ hath disdain of his neighboure, that is to saie, of his euin Christen, or hath dispite to doe that him ought to doe. Errogaunce, is he that thinketh that he hath those bountes in him, that he hath nat, or weneth that he should haue hem by his desertes, or els that he demeth, he is that he is nat. Impedent, is he that for his pride, hath no shame of his pride ne sinne. Swelling of harte, is whan man reioiseth him of harme, that he hath doen. Insolence, is he that dispiseth in his iudgement all other folke, as in regarde of his value, of his conning, of his speaking, & of his bearing. Elacion, is whan he ne maie neither suffer to haue maister ne felowe. Impacience, is he that woll not bee taughte, ne rebuked of his vice, and by strief denieth trouth wittingly, and defendeth his folie. Contumacie, is he that through his indignacion, is ayenst euery aucthorite or power, of hem that been his Soueraines. Presumpcion, is whan a manne vndertaketh an empryse that him ought not to do, or els that he maie not doe, and this is called surquidie. Irreuerence, is whan man doeth not honor there, as him ought to doe, and loke to be reuerenced. Pertinacie, is whan men defende her folie, and trust to moche on her own wit. Vainglorie, is for to haue pompe, and delite in his temporel hinesse, & glory him in worldly estates. Inagling, is whan men speake to moche before folke, and clappeth as a mille, and take no kepe what thei saie.

And yet there is a priuie spice of pride, that waiteth first to be salewed, or he woll salue, all be he lesse worthy than that other is. And also he waiteth or desireth to sit, or els to goe aboue him in the waie, or kisse pare, to be encenced, or go to offring before his neighbour, and soche semblable thinges, ayenst his duetie perauenture, but that he hath his harte and his entent, in soche a proude desire, to be magnified and honoured before the people.

Now ben there two maner of prides. One of hem is within the hart of a man, and that other is without. Of whiche forsaid thinges sothly, and mo than I haue saied, appertain to pride, that is in the hart of man, and other spices of pride been without, but natheless, that one of these spices of pride, is signe of that other, righte as the gaie leuesell at the Tauerne, is signe of the wine that is in the Cellere. And this is in many thinges: as in speache and countenaunce, and outragious arraie of clothing: for certes, if there had ben no sinne in clothing, Christ wold not so sone haue noted, and spoken of the clothing of the riche men in the Gospell. And as S. Grego. saieth, that precious clothing is coulpable, for the dearth of it, and for his softenesse, and for his straungenesse and disguising: And for the superfluite, or for thinordinate scantnes of it. Alas, maie not a man se as in our daies, the sinnefull costlewe arraie of clothing, and namely in to moche superfluite, or els in to disordinate scantnesse.

As to the firste sinne in superfluite of clothinge, soche that maketh it so deare, to the harme of the people, nat onely the cost of enbraudering, the disguised endenting, or barring, ounding, paling, winding, or bending, and semblable wast of clothe in vanite. But there is also the costlewe furring in her gounes, so moche pounling of chesel to make holes, so moche dagging of shires forthe, with the superfluite in length of the forsaied gounes, trailing in the dong and in the mire, on hors and also on foote, as well of man as of woman. That all that trailing is verely as in effect wasted, consumed, tredbare, and rotten with doung, rather than it is yeue to the poore, to great dommage of the forsaid poore folke, and that in sondrie wise, this is to saie that the more the clothe is wasted, the more must it cost to the poore people for the scarsenesse. And more ouer, if so be that thei would

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yeue suche pounsed and dagged clothing to the poore people, it is nat cõuenient to were for her estate, ne sufficient to her necessite, to kepe hem fro the distemperaunce of the firmament. Upon that other side, to speake of the horrible disordinate scãtnesse of clothing, as been these cutted sloppes or hanselines, that through her shortnesse couer not the shamefull membres of manne, to wicked entent. Alas, some of hem shewe the bosse of her shap, and the horrible swole membres that semeth like the maladye of Hernia, in the wrapping of her hosen, and also the buttockes of hem fare as it were the hinder parte of a she Ape in the full of the moone. And more ouer the wretched swolen mẽbres that they shewe through the disgutling, in departing of her hosen, in white and reed semeth that halfe her shamefull priuy membres were slain. And if so be that they departe her hosen in other colours, as is white and blewe, or white and blacke, or blacke and reed, and so forth: Than semeth it as by variaunce of colour that the halfe part of her priuy membres, ben corrupt by the fire of saint Anthony, or by canker, or other suche mischaunce. Of the hinder parte of the buttockes it is full horrible for to see, for certes in that partie of her body there as thei purge her stinking ordure, that foule partie shewe they to the people proudly in dispite of honestie, whiche honestie that Jesu Christ and his frendes obserued to shewe in her life. Nowe as to the outragious aray of women. God wote that though the visages of some of hem seme full chaste and debonaire, yet notify in her aray or atire, licorousnesse and pride: I say not that honeste in clothing of man or woman is vncouenable, but certes the superfluite of disordinate quantite of clothing is reprouable. Also the sinne of ornement or of apparaile is in thinges that appertaine to riding, as in company, delicate horses that ben holden for delite, that ben so faire, fatte, and costlewe, and also in many a nice knaue, that is susteined bicause of hem, in curious harneis, as in sadels, cropers, peitrels, and bridels couered with precious clothing, & riche barres of plates, of golde and of siluer. For which God saieth by Zacharie the prophete, I woll confounde the riders of suche horses. These folke take litel regarde of the riding of goddes sonne of heauen, and of his harneis when he rode vpon the Asse, and had none other harneis but the poore clothes of his disciples, ne we rede not that euer he rode on other beest. I speke this for the sinne of superfluite, and not for resonable honeste, when reason it requireth. And more ouer, certes pride is greatly notified in holdinge of great meine, when they been of litell profite or of right no profite, and namely whē that meine is felonous and dammageous to the people by hardinesse of highe lordship, or by waye of offices. For certes, suche lordes sell than her lordeshippe to the Deuill of Hell, whan they sustaine the wickednesse of her meine. Or els, whan these folke of lowe degre: as those that kepe hostelries, susteine thefte of her hostellers, and that is in manie maner of disceites: those maner of folke ben the flies that folow the hony, or els the houndes that folowe the caraine. Suche forsaied folke strangell spiritually her lordships: For suche, thus saieth Dauid the Prophete. Wicked death mighte come on those lordeshippes, and GOD yeue that they might discende into Hell, all doun, all downe: for in her houses been iniquities and shrewednesse, and not GOD of heauen. And certes, till they doen amendement, right as God yaue his blessing to Pharao by the seruice of Jacob, and to Laban by the seruice of Joseph: Right so God woll yeue his curse to suche lordshippes, as sustaine the wickednesse of her seruauntes, but they come to amendement. Pride of the table appereth also full ofte: for certes, riche menne be called to feestes, and pore folke ben put awaye and rebuked. And also in excesse of diuers meates and drinkes, and namely suche maner bake meates and dishe meates brenninge of wilde fire: peynted & castelled with paper and semblable waste, so that it is abusion to thinke. And also in to greate preciousnesse of vessell, and curiosite of minstralcy, by whiche a man is sterred more to delices of lecherie, if so be that he sette his harte the lesse vpon oure lorde Jesu Christe, certainely it is a sinne. And certainly the delices mighte be so greate in this case, that a manne might lightly fall by him in to a deedly sinne. The especes that sourde of pride, sothely whan they sourde of malice imagined, auised, and fore caste, or els of vsage ben deadly sinne, it is no doute. And when they sourde by freelte vnauised sodenly, and sodenly withdrawe ayen, all be they greuous sinnes, I gesse that they be not deedly. Nowe might menne aske, whereof that pride sourdeth and springeth. I say that somtime it springeth of ỹ goodes of nature, somtime of the goodes of fortune, and somtime

of the goodes of grace. Certes the goodes of nature stondeth onely in goodes of bodye, or goodes of the soule. Certes goodes of bodie ben hele of body, strēgth, deliuernesse, beaute, gentrie, franchise. Goodes of nature of the soule, ben good with sharpe vnderstonding, subtel engine, vertue naturel, good memory. Goodes of fortune, be riches, hie degrees of lordships, praysinges of the people. Goodes of grace: ben science, power to suffice spirituell traueile, benigne, vertuous contemplacion, vnderstonding, of temptacion, and semblable thinges: of whiche forsaid goodes: certes it is a full greate folie, a manne to haue pride in any of hem all. Now, as for to speake of goodes of nature, God wote that somtime we haue hem in nature asmuche to our domage as to our profit. As to speake of hele of body, truly it passeth full lightly, and also it is full ofte occasion of sickenesse of the soule: for God wote the flesche is a greate enemy to the soule: and therfore the more that the body is hole, the more we be in perill to fall. Also for to haue pride in his strength of body, it is an hie foly, for certes the flesh coueteth ayenst the spirite: and the more strong that the flesche is, the sorier maye the soule be. And ouer all this strength of body and worldly hardinesse, causeth full ofte manie manne to perill and mischaunce, and also to haue pride of his gentry, is right great foly: for oftime the gentry of the bodye, taketh awaye the gentry of the soule: and also we ben all of o father and mother: and all we been of o nature, rotten and corrupt, bothe riche and poore. For soth o maner gentry is for to praise, that apparelleth mannes courage. Witte, vertue, and moralite, maketh him Christes childe. For truste weil, that ouer what manne that sinne hath maystry, he is a very churle to sinne.

Nowe been there generall signes of gentilnesse: as eschewinge of vice and ribaudrye, and seruage of sinne: in worde, in werke, and continuaunce of vsing & vertue, curtesy, and clennesse, and to be liberall: that is to saye, large by measure: for that that passeth measure, is foly and sin: Another is to remembre him of bounte, that he of other folke hath receiued: An other is to be benigne to his good subiectes. Wherfore saieth Senecke: there is nothing more couenable to a manne of highe astate, than debonarite and pite. And therefore these flies that men call bees, whan they make her hinge, they chese one that hathe no priche, wherwith he may stinge.

Another is, manne to haue a noble harte and a diligent, to attayne to the highe vertuous thinges. Nowe certes, a manne to haue pride in the goodes of grace, is also an outragious foly: for those giftes of grace that shuld haue turned him to goodnesse, and to medicine, tourneth him to venim and confusion, as saieth saint Gregory. Certes also, who so hath pride in the goodesse of fortune, he is a full great fole: For sometime is a manne a great Lord by the morne that is a caitife and a wretche or it be nighte: and sometime the riches of a man is cause of his death. Sometime the delices of a manne, is cause of greuous maladie through whiche he dieth. Certes, the commendacion of the people is, somtime full false and brotell for to truste. This day they praise, to morowe they blame. God wote, desire to haue commendacion of the people, hath caused death to manie a busie manne. Nowe sithe that so is, that ye haue vnderstonde what is pride, and whiche be the speces of it, and whēce it sourdeth and springeth: nowe ye shall vnderstonde whiche is the remedy ayenst it. Humilite or meknesse is the remedy ayenst pride, that is a vertue, thorowe whiche a manne hath very knowlege of him self, and holdeth of him selfe nor price ne daintie, as in regarde of his desertes, considering euer his freelte. Nowe ben there thre maner of humilites: As humilite in hert, another humilite is in mouthe, and the thirde is in workes. The humilite in hert is in four maners: That one is, whan a man holdeth himselfe as nought worth before GOD of heauen. The seconde is, whan he dispiseth none other man. The thirde is, whan he ne recheth nat, though men holde him nought worthe. And the fourth is, whan he is not sory of his humiliacion. Also the humilite of mouthe is in foure thinges. In a temperate speche, in humilite of spech, and when he confesseth with his owne mouth, that he is such as him thinketh that he is in his herte: Another is when he praiseth the bounte of another manne and nothing therof minisheth. Humilite also in werke, is in foure maners. The firste is, when he putteth other menne before him, the seconde is to chese the lowest place ouer al, the thirde is gladly to assent to good counsaile, the fourth is, to stonde gladly to the awarde of his soueraines, or of him that is in hier degre: Certaine this is great werke of humilite.

¶ De Inuidia.

After pride wol I speke of the foule sinne of Enuye, whiche that is after the worde of the Philosopher, sorowe of other mennes prosperite. And after the worde of saint Augustin: it is the sorowe of other mennes wele, and the ioy of other mennes harme. This foule sinne is platly ayenst the holie ghoste: Al be it so, that euery sinne is ayenste the holy ghoste: Yet natheles, for as muche as bounte apertaineth properly to the holy goste: & Enuy cometh properly of malice, therefore it is properly ayenst the bounte of the holy goste. Now hath malice two spices, that is to saie, hardinesse of herte in wickednes, or els the flesche of a manne is so blinde, that he considereth nat that he is in sinne, or recketh not that he is in sinne, which is the hardinesse of the deuil. That other spice of Enuy is, when that a mã denieth trouth, when he knoweth that it is trouth and also when he repenteth the grace that God hath yeue to his neighbour: and all this is by Enuy. Certes, than is Enuy the worst sinne that is, for sothly all other sinnes be somtime onely ayenst o speciall vertue: but certes, enuy is ayenst al vertues and al goodnesse. For it is sory ayenst all the bountes of her neighboure, and in this maner, it is diuers from al other sinnes. Alas: For there ne is any sinne that it ne hath some delite in it selfe, saue only Enuy, that euer hath in it self anguish and sorowe. The speces of Enuy ben these: there is firste sorowe of other mennes goodnesse and of her prosperite, and prosperite is kindely matter of ioye: Than is enuy a sinne ayenst kinde. The seconde spece of Enuy, is ioye of other mennes harme, and that is properly like to the Deuill, that euer reioyseth him of mannes harme. Of these two speces cometh backbiting, and this sinne of bachebitinge or detractinge hathe certaine speces, as thus: Some manne praiseth his neighbour by a wicked entent, for he maketh alway a wicked knot at the laste ende: alway he maketh a but at the last ende, that is digne of more blame, than is worth al the praising. The seconde spece is, that if a man be good, or doth or saith a thing to good entent, the backbiter wol turne al that goodnesse vp so doun: to his shrewde entent. The thirde is to amonishe the bountie of his neighbour. The fourthe spece of backebiting is this, that if menne speke goodnesse of a manne, than wol the backebiter saye: Perfay suche a manne is yet better than he, in dispraising of him that menne praise. The fifthe spece is this, for to consent gladly and herke gladly to the harme that men speke of other folke: This sinne is full great, and aye encreseth after the wicked entent of the backbiter. After backbiting cometh grutchinge or murmuracion, and somtime it springeth of impacience ayenst God, and somtime ayenst manne. Ayenst God it is whan a man grutcheth ayenst paine of hell, or ayenst powerty, or losse of catteil, or ayenst raine or tẽpest, or els grutcheth that shrewes haue prosperite, or els for that good menne haue aduersite: and all these thinges shuld menne suffre pacientli, for they come by the rightful iudgement and ordinaunce of God. Sometime cometh grutching of auarice, as Judas grutched ayenst Maudelein, whan she anointed the heed of our lorde Jesu Christ, with her precious ointment. This maner murmuring is such as whan man grutcheth of goodnesse that him self doth, or that other folke doen of her owne catteil. Sometime cometh murmure of pride, as whan Simon the Pharise grutched ayenst Maudelein when she aproched to Jesu Christ and wepte at his fete for her sinnes. And somtime it sourdeth of Enuy, whan men discouer a mans harme that was priuy, or bereth him on hõde thing that is false. Murmure also is ofte amonge seruaũtes that grutche when her souerames bidde hem do lefull thinges, and for as much as they dare not openly with saye the commaundement of her souraines, yet wol they say harme and grutche and murmure priuely for very dispite: which wordes they call the diuels Pater noster, though so be that the diuell had neuer Pater noster, but that leude folke yeueth it suche a name. Somtime it cometh of ire or priuy hate, that norisheth rancour in the hart, as afterward I shal declare. Than cometh also bitternesse of herte, thorowe which bitternes euery good dede of his neighbour semeth to him bitter & vnsauery. Than cometh discorde that vnbindeth al maner of frendship. Than cometh scorninge of his neighbour, all do he neuer so well. Than cometh accusing, as whan man seketh occasion to anoie his neighbour, whiche is like the crafte of the diuel, that waiteth both day and night to accuse vs all. Than cometh malignite, through which a manne anoieth his neighbour priuely if he may, and if he maye

not algate his wicked will shall not let as for to brenne his house priuely, or enpoison or sle his beestes, and semblable thinges. Nowe woll I speke of the remedie ayenst this foule sinne of enuy. First is the loue of God principally, and louing of his neighbour as him selfe: for sothly that one ne may not be without that other. And trust well that in ỹ name of thy neighbour thou shalt vnderstande the name of thy brother, for certes all we haue one father fleshly and one mother, that is to saie Adam and Eue, and also one father spirituall, that is God of heuen. Thy neighbour art thou bounde for to loue, and will him all goodnesse, and therfore saieth God: Loue thy neighbour as thy self, that is to say, to saluation both of life & soule. And more ouer thou shalte loue him in worde and in benigne admoneshing and chastisinge, and comfort him in his noyaunces, and pray for him with all thy herte. And in dede thou shalt loue him in suche wise that thou shalte do to him in charite, as thou woldest that it were don to thin owne person: and therfore thou ne shalte doe him no domage in wicked worde, ne harme in his body ne in his catel, ne in his soule by entising of wicked ensample. Thou shalte not desire his wife ne none of his thinges. Understond also that in the name of neighbour is comprehẽded his enemy: Certes man shall loue his enemy by the cõmaundement of god: and sothly thy frende thou shalt loue in God. I saie thin enemie, shalt thou loue for goddes sake, by his commaundement, for if it were reason that man should hate his enemy, forsoth god nolde not receiue vs to his loue that been his enemies. Ayenst thre maner of wronges that his enemy doth to him, he shal do thre thinges, as thus: ayenst hate and rancour of hert, he shal loue him in hert: Ayenst chiding and wicked wordes he shal praye for his enemy: Ayenst wicked dedes, he shall doe him bounte. For Christ saith: Loue your enemies, and praie for hẽ that speke you harme, and for hem that chace and pursue you: and do bountie to hem that hate you. Lo, thus cõmaundeth vs our lorde Jesu Christe to do to our enemies: For sothe nature driueth vs to loue our frendes, & parfay our enemies haue more nede of loue than our frendes, and they that more nede haue, certes to hem shall men do goodnesse. And certes in that dede haue we remembraunce of the loue of Jesu Christe that died for his enemies: And in as much as that loue is more greuous to perfourme, so muche is the more great the merite, and therfore the louing of our enemie hath confounded the deuils venim: For right as the deuill is confounded by humilite, righte so is he wounded to ỹ deth by the loue of our enemy, certes than is loue the medicin that casteth out the venim of enuy fro mans herte. The spices of this place shal be more largely declared in her chapiters folowing.

¶ De Ira.

After Enuy wol I discriue the sinne of Ire, for sothely who so hath Enuy vpon his neighbour, anone he woll comenlye finde him a matter of wrathe in worde or in dede, ayenst him to whome he hath Enuy: And as well cometh Ire of pride as of Enuy, for sothly he that is proude or enuious is lightly wrothe.

This sin of Ire, after the discriuing of S. Austin is wicked wil to be auenged by worde or by dede. Ire after the Philosopher, is the feruent bloode of man iquicked in his herte, through which he would harme to him that he hateth: for certes the herte of manne by eschauffing and mouing of his bloode, wereth so troubled, that it is out of all maner iudgement of reason. But ye shal vnderstonde that Ire is in two maners, that one of hem is good, and that other is wicked. The good ire is by ielousie of goodnes throughe whiche a man is wrothe with wickednesse, and ayenst wickednesse. And therfore saith a wise man, that ire is bet than playe. This ire is with debonairte, and it is wroth without bitternesse, not wroth ayenst the man, but wrothe with the mislede of the manne. As saith the prophete Dauid: Irascimini, & nolite peccare. Nowe vnderstonde that wicked Ire is in two maners, that is to saye, sodaine ire or hasty ire without auisement and cõsenting of reason: The meaninge and the sence of this is, that the reason of a man ne consente not to that sodeine ire, and than it is veniall. Another ire is ful wicked, that cometh of felonie of herte, auised and caste before with wicked wil to do vengeaunce, and therto his reason cõsenteth: and sothly this is deedly sin. This ire is so displesaunt to God, that it troubleth his house, and chaseth the holy ghoste out of mans soule, and wasteth and distroieth that liknesse of god, that is to say, the vertue that is in mans soule, and putteth in him the liknesse of the deuill, and taketh the man fro god

that

that is his rightfull lord. This is a ful great pleasaūce to the deuill, for it is the deuils forneis that is eschauffed with the fire of Hell: for certes right so as fire is more mighty to distroye earthly thinges, than any other element, right so ire is mighty to distroie al spirituel thinges. Loke how we that fire of smale coles that been almost deed vnder ashen, woll reuiue or quicke ayen when thei ben touched with brimstone, right so ire woll euer more quicke ayen when it is touched, by the pride that is couered in mans herte. For certes fire ne maie not come out of nothinge, but if it were first in the same thing naturally: as fire is drawen out of flintes with steel. And right so as pride is many times matter of ire, right so is rancour norice and keper of Ire. There is a maner tree, as saieth saint Isodore, that whan a manne maketh fire of the saide tree, and couer the coles of it with ashen, sothely the fire of it woll last a yere or more: And right so fareth it of rancour, when it is ones conceiued in the hert of some men, certes it woll laste perauenture from one Ester day vntill an other Ester daye or more. But certes the same man is ful ferre from the mercy of God all that while.

In this forsaide deuils forneis there forge thre shrewes: Pride that aye bloweth and encreaseth, the fire by chiding and wicked wordes: Than stondeth enuy and holdeth hotte yron in the fire vpon the hert of man, with a payre of long tonges of longe rancoure. And than stondeth the sinne of cōtumelie or strife and chelle, and battereth and forgeth by vilainous reproeuinges. Certes this cursed sin anoieth bothe to the manne him self and also his neighboure. For sothely almoste all the harme or damage that any man dothe to his neighbour commeth of wrath: for certes outragious wrathe dothe all that euer the foule feinde willeth or commaundeth him, for he ne spareth neither our lorde Jesu Christ, nether his swete mother. And in his outragious angre and ire, alas alas, full many and diuers at that time, feleth in his herte full wickedly bothe of Christ, and also of all his halowes: Is not this a cursed vice? yes certes. Alas it taketh fro man his witte and his reason, and all his debonayre life spirituell that shoulde kepe his soule. Certes it withdraweth also goddes dewe lordship, and that is mās soule, and the loue of his neighboures. It striueth also al daye ayenst trouthe, it reueth him the quiete of his hart, and subuerteth his soule.

Of ire cometh these stinking engendrures, first hate, that is olde wrath. Discorde, thorowe which a man forsaketh his olde frende that he hath loued full longe. And than commeth warre and euery maner of wrong that a man dothe to his neighbour in bodye or in catell. Of this cursed sinne of ire cometh also manslaughter. And vnderstonde well that homicide, that is manslaughter is in diuers wise.

Some maner of homicide is spirituell, and some is bodely. Spirituell manslaughter is in .vi. thinges. First by hate as saieth sainte Jhon. He that hateth his brother, is an homicide. Homicide is also by backbiting, of whiche backbiting saieth Salomon, that thei haue two swerdes, with whiche they sle her neighbours: For sothely as wicked is to take fro him his good name as his life. Homicide is also in yeuinge of wicked counseil by fraude, as for to yeue counsayle to areise wrongful customes, and talages. Of whiche saith Salomon: A Lion rorynge and a Beere hungry, be like to the cruell Lordes in withholding or abredging of the wepe or the hire of the wages of Seruauntes, or elles in blurie, or in withdrawinge of the Almesse of poore folke. For whiche the wise man saieth, Fedeth him that almoost dieth for honger, for sothly but if ye fede him ye slee him. And all these been deedly sinnes. Bodily manne slaughter is when thou sleest him with thy tounge: An other maner is, when thou commaundest to slee a man, or elles yeuest counsaile to slee a man. Manslaughter in dede is in foure maners. That one is by lawe, right as a Justice dampneth him that is culpable to the death. But let the Justice beware that he doe it rightfully, and that he doe it not for delite to spill blood, but for keping of rightwisnesse. An other homicide is done for necessite, as when a man sleeth an other in his defence, and that he ne may none other wise escape without slaughter of his aduersarie, he doth sinne, and he shall beare penaunce as for deedly sinne. Also if a manne by case or aduenture shote an arrowe or caste a stone, with which he sleeth a mā, he is an homicide. Also if a woman by negligence ouerlieth her child in her slepinge, it is homicide and deedly sin. Also whan man disturbleth conception of a childe, and maketh a woman either bareyne by drinking of venemous herbes, throughe which she may not conceiue, or sleeth a childe by drinkes, or els putteth certaine materiall

thinges in her secret places to slee the childe, or els doth unkindly sinne, by whiche a man or a woman shedeth her nature in maner or in a place there as a childe maye not be conceyued. Or els if so be that a woman hathe conceiued, and hurteth her selfe, and by that mischappe the childe is slayne, yet it is homicide. What say we of those women that murderen her children for because of eschewynge of worldely shame? Certes it is an horrible homicide. Homicide is also if a manne approche to a woman by desire of lechery, thorowe whiche the child is perished, or els smiteth a woman wittingly, through which she leseth her childe: Al these ben homicides and horrible deedly sinnes. Yet come there of ire mo sinnes, as well in worde as in thought, and dede. As he that arreteth upon God, or blameth God of the thing of which he is him selfe gilty, or dispiseth God and all his halowes, as don the cursid hasardours in diuers countreis: This cursid sinne don they, whan they sele in her herte ful wickedly of God and of his halowes. Also when they trete unreuerently the sacrament of the auter, that sin is so gret that unneth it may be releaced, but that the mercy of God passeth al his werkes, it is so great and he so benigne. Than cometh of ire an atterly angre, whan a man is sharply amonested in his shrifte to leaue his sinne: Than woll he be angrie, and answere hokerly and angerly, or defende or excuse his sinne by unstedfastnesse of his flesshe, or els he did it for to holde companie with his felowes, or els he saith the fende enticed him, or els he doth it for his youthe, or els his complexcion is so coragious that he may not forbeare, or els it is his destenie he saieth unto a certaine age, or els he saith it cometh him of gentilnesse of his auncestres, and semblable thinges. All these maner of folke so wrappe hem in her sinnes, that thei ne woll not deliuer hemselfe: For sothly no wight that excuseth him selfe wilfully of his sinne, maye not be deliuered of his sinne, till that he mekely beknoweth his sinne. After this than cometh swearinge, that is expresse ayenste the commaundement of God, and this befalleth often of angre and of Ire. God saieth. Thou shalte not take the name of thy Lorde God in veine or in idell. Also oure lorde Jesu Christ saieth by the worde of sainte Mathew: Ne will ye not swere in all maner, neither by heuen, for it is goddes trone, ne by erth, for it is the bence of his fete, ne by Hierusalem, for it is the cite of a great King, ne by thine heed, for thou maiste not make an heere neyther white ne blacke: but saye by youre worde, ye ye, naye, naye: and what that is more, it is of euill. Thus saieth Christe. For Christes sake sweare not so sinfully in dismembringe of Christe: By soule, herte, bones, and body, for certes it semeth that ye thinke that the cursed Jewes ne dismembred not inoughe the precious person of Christ, but ye dismembre him more. And if so be that the lawe compell you to swere, thā ruleth you after the lawe of god in your swering, as saieth Jeremie. iiii. cap. Thou shalte kepe thre condicions, thou shalt sweare in trouth, in dome, and in rightwisenesse, this is to saye, thou shalte sweare soth. For euery lesinge is ayenst Christ, for Christe is verie trouthe. And thinke well this that euery greate swearer not compelled lawfully to sweare, the plage shall not departe fro his hous, while he vseth such unlefull swearing. Thou shalte swere also in dome, whan thou arte constreined by thy domes manne to witnesse trouthe: Also thou shalte not sweare for enuie, neither for fauour, nether for mede, or reward, but onely for rightwisnesse and for declaringe of it to the honour and worshippe of God, and to the aydinge and helpe of thine euin Christen. And therefore euery man that taketh goddes name in idell, or falsely sweareth with his mouth, or els taketh on him the name of Christe to be called a Christen man, and liueth ayenst Christes liuinge and his teaching, all they take goddes name in idell. Loke also what saieth saynt Peter, Actuum iiii. capitu. Non est aliud nomen sub celo. &c. There is none other name saieth saint Peter under heuen yeue to men, in which they may be saued, that is to say, but the name of Jesu Christe. Take hede eke howe precious is the name of Jesu Christe, as saith sainte Poule, ad Philipenses. ii. In nomine Iesu. &c. That in the name of Jesu euery knee of Heuenly creatures, earthly, and of hel should bowe, for it is so hie and so worshipfull, that the cursed fende in hell should tremble to here it named. Than semeth it that men that swere so horribly by his blessed name, that they dispise it more boldely than the cursed iewes, or els the diuel that trēbleth whan he hereth his name

Nowe certes sithe that swearing, but if it be lawfully done, is so hiely defended: moche more is forswering falsely, and yet nedelesse.

What say we also of hem that delite hem in swearing, and holde it a genterye or a manly

dede

dede to swere great othes? And what of hem that of very vsage, ne cease not to swere great othes, all be the cause not worthe a strawe? Certes, this is horrible sinne. Swearing ordeinly, is also a greate sinne. But lette vs go now to that horrible sinne, swearing of adiuracion and coniuracion, as doen these fals Enchauntours, or Nigramacers in Balins full of water, or in a bright swearde, in a circle, in a fire, or in the shulder bone of a shepe? I can not saie, but that thei doe cursedly and damnablie ayenst Christ, and all the faith of holie churche.

What say we of hem, that beleue on Deuinales, as by flighte or by noise of birdes or of beast, or by sorte, by Geomancie, by dreames, by chirking of doores, or craking of houses, by gnawing of rattes, and soche maner wret chidnesse? Certes, all these thinges been defended by God, and holy churche, for whiche thei been accursed, till thei come to amendement, that on soch filth set her beleue. Charmes for woundes, or maladie of menne, or of beastes, if thei take any effect, it maie be parauenture that God suffreth it, for folke shuld yeue the more faith, & reuerence to his name.

Now woll I speake of leasinges, whiche generally is false signifiaunce of woorde in entent, to deceiue his euin Christen. Some leasing, is of whiche there commeth none auauntage to no wight, and some leasing turneth to the profite and ease of a man, and to the damage of an other man. An other leasing is, for to saue his life or his catell, which cometh of delite for to lie, in which delite thei woll forge a long tale, & peint it with all circumstaunces, where al the tale of the ground is false. Some leasing cometh, for he wolle sustein his wordes: Some leasing cometh of retchelesnesse without auisemente, and semblable thinges.

Lette vs now touche the vice of flatterie, whiche ne cometh not gladly but for dreade, or for couetise. Flatterie, is generally wrõgfull praising. Flatterers been the deuils norices, that norisshe his children, with milke of losingerie: forsoth Salomon saith, that flatterie is worse than detraction, for sometime detraction maketh an hautein manne, be the more humble, for he dreadeth detraction, but certes flatterie maketh a man, tenhaunce his harte and his countenaunce. Flatterers bee the Deuilles enchauntours, for thei make a manne to wene himself be like, that he is nat like. Those bee like to Judas, that betraie a manne, to sell him to his enemie. Flatterers been the deuilles Chapeleins, that euer sing Placebo. I reken flatterie in the vices of ire: forsoth time if a man be wroth with an other, than woll he flatter some wight, to sustaine him in his quarell.

Speake we now of soche cursing, as commeth of irous hart. Malison generally may be saied, euery maner power of harme: soche cursing bereueth man fro the reigne of God, as saieth S. Poule. And ofte time soche cursing wrongfully, returneth ayen to him that curseth, as a birde that turneth again to his owne nesse. And ouer all thing, men oughte eschue to curse her childzen, and yeue to the Deuill her engendzure, as ferre forthe as in hem is: certes, it is great peril & great sinne.

Let vs than speake of chiding and repzoch whiche been full greate woundes in mannes harte, for thei vnsowe the semes of frendship in mannes harte: For certes, vnneth maie a man plainly be accorded with him, that him openly hath reuiled and repzeued, & disclaundzed: This is a full ghostly sinne, as Christe saieth in the Gospel. And take hede now, that he that repzeueth his neighbour, ether he repzeueth him by some harme of pain, that he hath vpon his bodie, as Mesell, croked, harlot, or by some sinne that he doeth. Now if ye repzeue him by harme of pain, than turneth the repzeue to Jesu Christ: for pain is send by the right wise sonde of God, and by his sufferaunce, be it meselrie, maime, or malady: and if he repzeue him vncharitably of sinne, as thou holour, thou dronkelewe harlot, and so forth. Than pertaineth that to the reioising of the deuill, whiche euer hath ioie that men doen sin. And certes, chiding maie not come but of vilanous harte, for after the habounddaunce of the harte, speaketh the mouth full oft. And ye shall vnderstond, that loke by any waie, whan any man shall chastise or correct an other, that he be ware from chiding or repzeuing: for truly but he beware, he maie full lightly quicke the fire of angre and of wzath, whiche he should quenche: and perauenture, slaeth him, which he might chastise with benignite. For as saith Salomon: the amiable tongue is the tree of life, that is to saie, of life spirituell. And sothly, a dissolute tong slaeth the spirites of hem that repzeueth, and also of him whiche is repzeued. Lo, what saieth sainct Augustin: There is nothing so like the deuils child, as he whiche oft chideth. A seruaunte of GOD behoueth not to chide. And

though that chiding bee a villainous thing, betwirt al maner folke, yet it is certes moste vncouenable, betwene a man and his wife, for there is neuer reste. And therefore saieth Salomon: An hous that is vncouered and dropping, and a chiding wife, been a like.

A manne, which is in a dropping hous in many places, though he eschue the dropping in o place, it droppeth on him in an other place: So fareth it by a chiding wife, if she chide him in one place, she woll chide him in an other: And therefore better and greatly more pleasaunt is a morsell, or little gobet of breade with ioye, than an hous filled full of delices, with chiding and gnerring, saieth Salomon. Sainct Poule saith: O ye wommen, bee ye subgette to your husebandes, as you behoueth and ought in God: And ye men loueth your wiues. Ad Colonicenses. iii.

Afterward speake we of scorning, whiche is a wicked sinne, and namely whan he scorneth a man for his good werkes: For certes, soche scorners fare like the foule Tode, that maie not endure to smell the swete sauour of the vine, whan it flourisheth. These scorners been parting felowes with the deuil, for thei haue ioie whan the Deuill winneth, and sorowe if he leseth. Thei been aduersaries of Jesu Christ, for thei hate that he loueth, that is to saie, saluacian of soule.

Speake we now of wicked counsaile, the whiche is a Traitoure, for he deceiueth him that trusteth in him: vt Achitofell ad Salomonem. But natheless, yet is his wicked counsaile, first ayenst himself, for as saith the wiseman: Euery false liuing hath this propertie in himself, that he that woll anoie an other man, he anoieth first himself. And men shall vnderstond, that man shall not take his counsaile of false folke, ne of angrie folke, or greuous folke, ne of folke that loue specially to moche worldly folke, namely in counsailing of soules.

Now cometh the sinne of hem that sowe and make discorde emong folke, whiche is a sinne that Christ hateth vtterly, and no wõder is: for he died for to make concorde. And more shame doe thei to Christe, than did thei that him crucified: for god loueth better that frendship bee emonges folke, than he did his owne body, whiche that he gaue for vnite. Therfore been thei likened to the deuill, that euer be about to make discorde. Now cometh the sinne of double toungue, soche as speake faire before folke, and wickedly behind, or els thei make semblaunte, as though thei spake of good entencion, or els in game and plaie, and yet thei speake of wicked entent.

Now commeth bewraying of counsaile, through whiche a man is defamed: certes vneth maie he restore ỹ damage. Now cometh menace, that is an open folie, for he that ofte menaceth, he threatteth more than he maie performe ful oft time. Now cometh idel wordes, that is without profite of him that speaketh the wordes, and also of him that harkeneth the woordes: Or els idell woordes been those that been nedelesse, or without entente of naturell profite. And albeit that idel wordes, be sometime veniall sinne, yet should men doubt hem, for we shall yeue rekening of hem before God. Now cometh iangling, that may not bee without sinne. And as saieth Salomon: it is a signe of a part foly. And therfore a Philosopher saied, whan menne asked him how that he should please the people, he answearde: Doe many good werkes, and speake fewe vanites. After this cometh the sinne of iaperies, that been the deuilles Apes, for thei make folke to laugh at her iaperie, as folke doe at the gaudes of an ape: whiche iapes defendeth sainct Poule. Loke how that vertuous wordes and holy, comfort hem that trauaile in the seruice of Christe. Right so comforteth the vilainous wordes and knackes of japers hẽ, that trauaile in the seruice of the deuill. These been the sinnes of the toungue, that come of ire, and of other sinnes.

¶ The remedie ayenst Ire.

The remedy ayenst Ire, is a vertue that men call mansuetude that is Debonairte, and also an other vertue that menne clepe pacience or sufferaunce. Debonairte withdraweth & refraineth, the stearinges and mouinges of mannes corage in harte, in soche maner that thei ne ship nat out by anger ne Ire. Sufferaunce suffreth swetely all the anoiaunces & wronges that menne doen to man outward. S. Jerome saieth this of debonairte, that it doeth no harme to no wight, ne saieth: ne for no harme that men doe ne saie, he ne chaseth ayenst reason. This vertue somtime cometh of nature: for as saith ỹ Philosopher. A man is a quicke thing by nature, debonaire and treatable to goodnes: but whã debonairte is enformed of grace, thã it is the more worthy.

Pacience

Paciẽce is an other remedy ayenst ire, and is a vertue that suffreth swetely euery mannes goodnes, and is nat wroth for no harme that is doen to him. The Philosopher saith, that paciẽce is the vertue that suffreth debonairly, all the outrages of aduersite, and euery wicked worde. This vertue maketh a man like to God, and maketh him Goddes owne child: as saieth Christ. This vertue discomfiteth thine enemies. And therefore saieth the Wiseman: if thou would venquish thine enemie, learne to suffre. And thou shalte vnderstonde, that a man suffereth fower maner of greuaunces, in outwarde thinges, ayenst the whiche fower, he must haue fower maner of paciences.

The first greuaunce is of wicked woordes, whiche suffered Jesu Christe without grutching full pacientlỹ, whan the Jewes dispised him full oft. Suffer thou therfore pacientlỹ, for the Wiseman saith: if thou striue with a foole, though the foole be wroth, or though he laugh, alwaie thou shalte haue no reste.

That other greuaunce outwarde, is to haue dommage of thy cattell: There ayenst suffred Christ full pacientlỹ, whan he was dispoiled of all that he had in this life, & that was but his clothes. The thirde greuaunce, is a man to haue harme in his body: that suffred Christ full pacientlỹ in all his passion. The fourth greuaunce, is in outragious labour in werkes: wherefore I saie, that folke that make her seruauntes to trauaile to greuously, or out of time, as in holy daies, sothly thei dooe greate sinne. Here ayenst suffred Christe full pacientlỹ, and taught vs pacience, whan he bare vpon his blessed shulders the crosse, vpõ whiche he should suffre dispitous death. Here maie men learne to be pacient, for certes, not onely Christen bee paciente for loue of Jesu Christ, and for rewarde of the blessed life that is perdurable, but certes the olde Painems, that neuer were Christened, commended and vsed the vertue of pacience.

A Philosopher vppon a time, that would haue beat his disciple, for his great trespace, for whiche he was moued, and brought a rod to beate the childe, and whan this child sawe the rodde, he said to his maister: what thinke ye to doe? I woll beate thee saied the maister for thy correction: Forsothe saied the childe, ye ought firste correcte your selfe, that haue lofte all your pacience, for the offence of a childe. Forsoth saied the maister al weping, thou saiest soth: haue thou the rodde my dere childe, and correcte me for mine impacience. Of pacience cometh obedience, throughe whiche a manne is obedient to Christ, and to all hem to which he ought be obedient in christ. And vnderstande well, that obedience is perfite, whan that a man doeth gladly and haskely, with good harte entierly, all that he should dooe. Obedience generally, is to perfourme the doctrine of god, and of his souerainesse, to whiche him ought to be obeisaunt in all rightwisnesse.

¶De Accidie.

After the sinnes of Enuie and Ire, now woll I speake of the sinne of Accidie: for enuie blindeth the harte of a manne, and ire troubleth a man, and Accidie maketh him heuy, thought full and penslfe. Enuy and ire maken bitternesse in harte, whiche bitternesse is moder of accidie, & taketh fro him the loue of all goodnesse, than is accidie the anguisshe of trouble of harte. And sainct Augustin saieth: It is anoie of goodnesse and anoie of harme. Certes this is a dampnable sinne, for it doeth wrõg to Jesu Christ, in as moch as it benommeth the seruice that men ought doe to Christe, as saieth Salomon: but Accidie doeth no soche diligence. He doeth al thing with anoie, and with wrawnesse, slackenesse, and excusation: with idelnesse & vnlust. For whiche the booke saieth. A cursed bee he, that doeth the seruice of God negligently. Than is accidie enemie to euery estate of man. For certes the estate of man, is in thre maners. Either it is in the estate of innocencie, as was the estate of Adã, before that he fill into sinne, in which estate he was holde to worke, as in praising and lauding God. An other estate is the estate of sinfull men: in whiche estate men been holdẽ to labour in praying to God, for amendemẽt of her sinnes, and that he would graunt hem to rise out of her sinnes.

An other estate, is the estate of grace, in whiche state he is holden to workes of penitence: and certes, to all these thinges is accidie contrary, for he loueth nõ busines at al. Now certes, this foule sinne accidie, is also a full greate enemie to the liuelode of the body for it ne hath no purueiaunce ayenst temporel necessite, for it forslweth, forslogeth, and distroith al goodes temporell by recheleisnes.

The fowerth thing is, that accidie is like hem

hem that been in the paine of hell, bicause of her sloth and heauines: for thei that be damned, ben so bound, that thei may neither wel doe ne thinke. Of accidie cometh first that a manne is anoied and encombred to doe any goodnesse, and maketh that God hath abhominacion of soche accidie, as saith S. Jhon.

Now cometh sloth, that will nat suffre no hardnesse ne penaunce: for sothly slothe is so tender and so delicate, as saieth Salomon, that he will suffer no hardnesse ne penaunce, and therfore he marreth all that he doeth. Ayenst this rotten sinne of accidie and slothe, should men exercise hem self, and vse hem to do good workes: and manly and vertuously catch corage to doe, thinking ỹ our lorde Jesu Christ quitteth euery good deede, bee it neuer so lite. Vsage of labour is a greate thing. For it maketh, as saieth S. Bernarde, the labourer to haue strong armes, and harde senewes: and slothe maketh heuy, feble, and tender. Than cometh dreade to beginne to worke any good workes. For certes, he that enclineth to sin, him thinketh it is so great an emprise, for to vndertake the woorkes of goodnesse, and casteth in his harte, that the circumstaunces of goodnesse, been so greuous and weightie for to suffre, that he dare not vndertake to doe workes of goodnes, as saith sainct Gregorie.

Now cometh wanhope, that is dispeire of the mercie of God, that cometh somtime of to moche outragious sorowe, and sometime of to moche dreade, imagining that he hath doe so moche sinne, that it will not availe him, tho he would repent him, and forsake sinne: through whiche dispeire or dread, he abandoneth all his harte to euery maner sinne, as saieth sainct Augustine. Whiche dampnable sinne, if it continue vnto his ende, it is called sinning in the holy ghost. This horrible sin is so perillous, that he that is dispeired, ther nis no felonie ne no sinne, that he doubteth for to doe, as sheweth well by Judas. Certes, aboue all sinnes than is this sinne, moste displeasaunte to Christe, and moste aduersarie. Sothly, he that dispeireth him, is like to the coward chãpion recreaunt, that flieth without nede. Alas alas, nedeles is he recreaunt, and nedelesse dispaired. Certes, the mercie of God is euer redy to the penitent persone, and is aboue all his werkes. Alas can not a man bethinke him on the Gospell of S. Luke. xb. where as Christ saith, that as well shal there be ioie in heauen, vpon a sinfull manne that doeth penitence, as vpon. xcix. rightfull men that nede no penitence. Looke ferther in the same Gospel, the ioy and the feast of the good man, that had lost his sonne, whan his sonne with repentaunce was retourned to his father. Can thei not remember hem also, that (as saieth S. Luke) Chapi. xx. How that the thief that was hanged beside Jesu Christe, saied: Lord remember me, whan thou comest in thy reigne. Forsoth saied Christ, I saie to thee: to daie shalt thou be with me in Paradise. Certes, there is non so horrible sinne in man, that ne maie in his life bee distroied by penitence, through vertue of the passion and of the death of Christe. Alas what nede men than to be dispaired, sith that his mercy is so redy and large? Aske and haue. Than cometh sompnolẽce, that is sluggie, slombring, whiche maketh a man heauie, and dulle in bodie and in soule, and this sinne cometh of slothe: And certes, the time that by wale of reason, man should not slepe, is by the morowe, but if there wer cause reasonable. For sothly, the morowe tide is moste couenable, a manne to saie his praiers, and for to thanke God, and to honor God, and to yeue almose to the poor that cometh first in the name of Jesu Christ.

Loe, what saieth Salomon? Who so will by the morowe awake to seke me, he shal find me. Than cometh negligence or retcheleснes that recketh of nothing. And though that ignorance bee mother of all harmes, certes, negligence is the norice. Negligence ne doth no force, whan he shall doe a thing, whether he doe it well or euill.

The remedy of these two sinnes is, as saith the wiseman: that he that dredeth God, spareth not to doe that he ought to dooe, and he that loueth GOD, he will dooe diligence to please GOD by his werkes, and abandone himself with all his might, well for to dooe. Than cometh idelnesse, that is the yate of all harmes. An idell manne is like to a place that hath no walles, the deuill maie enter on euery side, or shote at him that is discouerte, by temptacion on euery side. This idelnes is the thorruke of all wicked & vilaine thoughtes, and of all ordure. Certes, the heauen is yeue to hem that will labour, and not to idel folke. Also Dauid saieth, that thei ne bee not in the labour of menne, ne thei shall not bee whipped with men, that is to saie in Purgatorie. Certes, than semeth it thei shall be turmented with the deuils in hell, but if thei do penaunce.

Than cometh the sinne, that men call tarditas,

ditas, as whan a man is so latered, or tarying or he woll tourne to God: and certes, that is a greate foly. He is like him that falleth in the ditche, and woll not arise. And this vice cometh of fals hope, that he thinketh he shal liue long, but that hope faileth full oft.

Than cometh lachesse, that is he that whā he beginneth any good worke, anon he woll leaue and stint it, as doen thei that haue any persone to gouerne, & ne take of him no more hede, anon as thei finde any contrary or any anoie. These been the newe shepherdes, that let their shepe wittingly go ren to the wolfe, that is in the breres, or dooe not force of her owne gouernaunce. Of this cometh pouerte and distruction, bothe of spirituell and temporell thinges. Than cometh a maner coldenesse, that freseth the harte of man. Than cometh vndeuocion, through whiche a man is so blont, and as saith S. Bernard, hath soche langoure in his soule, that he maie neither rede ne sing in holy churche, ne here ne think of no deuocion, ne trauaile with his hondes in no good worke, that it nis to him vnsauery and all apalled. Than wexeth he slow and slombry, and sone woll be wroth, and sone is enclined to hate and enuy. Than cometh the sinne of worldly sorowe, soche as is called Tristicia, that slaeth a man, as saieth saincte Poule. For certes, soche sorowe worketh the death of the soule and bodie also, for thereof cometh that a man is anoied of his own life wherefore soche sorowe shorteth full oft the life of man, er that his time is come, by waie of kinde.

Remedium contra peccatum Accidie.

Ayenst this horrible sinne of accidie, and the braunches of the same, there is a vertue that is called Fortitudo or strengthe, that is an affection, throughe whiche a man dispiseth anoyous thinges: this vertue is so mightie and so rigorous, that it dare withstonde mightilie, and wisely kepe himself fro perilles that ben wicked, & wrastell ayenst the assaultes of the deuill, for it enhaunceth & enforceth the soul, right as accidie abateth and maketh it feble: for this fortitude maie endure by long sufferaunce, the trauailes that been couenable.

This vertue hath many speces, the first is called Magnanimite, that is to saie, greate corage. For certes, there behoueth greate corage ayenst Accidie, lest that it ne swallowe the soule by the sinne of sorowe, or distroie it by wāhope. Certes, this vertue maketh folke vndertake, hard and greuous thinges by her own will, wisely and reasonably. And for as moche as the deuil fighteth ayenst a manne, more by subtilte and sleight, than by strēgth, therfore shall a man withstande him by wit, reason, and discrecio. Than are there the vertues of faithe, and hope in GOD and in his sainctes, to eschue and accomplishe the good workes, in the whiche he purposeth fermely to continue. Than cometh suretie of sikernesse, and that is whan a man, ne doubteth no trauaile in time cōming, of the good workes that he hath begon. Than cometh Magnificence, that is to saie, whan a man doth and performe great workes of goodnes, that he hath begon, and that is thēde, why ỹ men should doe good workes. For in thaccomplishing of good workes, lieth the great guerdon. Than is there Constaunce, that is stablenes of corage, and this should be in harte by stedfast faith, and in mouth, in bearing, in chere, and in deede. Also there been mo speciall remedies ayenst accidie, in diuers woorkes: as in consideracion of the paines of hell, the ioyes of heauen, and in trust of the grace of the holy ghost, that will yeue him might to performe his good entent.

De Auaricia.

After Accidie, woll I speake of Auarice, and of Couetise. Of whiche sinne S. Poule saith: the roote of all harmes is Couetise. Ad Timoth. vi. For sothly, whan the hart of manne is confounded in it self and troubled, and that the soule hath lost the comforte of God, than seketh he an idell solace of worldly thinges.

Auarice, after the discripcion of S. Augustine, is a licorousnes in hart to haue yearthly thinges. Some other folke saie, that Auarice is for to purchace many yearthly thinges, and nothing to yeue to hem that haue nede. And vnderstande, that auarice standeth not onely in lande ne cattell, but somtime in science & glorie, & in euery maner of outragious thinges is auarice. And couetise is this.

Couetise, is for to couete soche thinges, ỹ thou hast nat. And Auarice is to withholde and kepe soch thinges, as thou hast without right. Sothly, this auarice is a sinne, that is full dampnable, for all holy writ curseth it,

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and speaketh ayenst that vice, for it dooeth wrong to Jesu Christe: for it taketh fro him, the loue that men to him owe, and tourneth it backewarde ayenst all reason, and maketh that the auaricious man, hath more hope in his cattell, than in Jesu Christe, and doeth more obseruaunce in keping of his treasour, than he doeth in the seruice of Jesu Christe. And therefore saieth sainct Poule: Ad Ephesios quinto: That an auaricious man is the thraldome of Idolatrie.

What difference is there betwixte an Idolastre, and an auaricious man? But that an Idolastre, parauenture ne hath nat but a Maumet or two, and the auaricious manne hath many. For certes, euery Florein in his cofer, is his maumet. And certes, the sinne of maumetrie, is the first that God defended, as in the. x. cõmaundemente it beareth witnes, in Exodi. Capi. xx. Thou shalt haue no false Goddes before me, ne thou shalt make to thee no graue thing. Thus is an auaricious man that loueth his treasure before God, an Idolastre. And through this cursed sinne of auarice and couetise, cometh these hard lordshippes, through whiche thei been streined by tillages, customes, and cariages, more than her duetie or reason is, or els take thei of her bonmenne amerciamentes, whiche might more reasonably be called extorcions, than merciamentes. Of which amerciamẽtes, or raunsoming of bondmen, some Lordes ke wardes saie, that it is rightfull, for as muche as a churle hath no temporell thing, that it ne is his lordes, as thei saie. But certes, these lordshippes doe wrong, that bereue their bondemen, thinges that thei neuer yaue hem. Augustinus de Ciuitate dei. Libro. iv. Sothe is that the condicion of thraldome, and the first cause of thraldom was for sinne.

Thus maie ye se, that the offence deserued thraldome, but nat nature. Wherefore these Lordes ne should not moche glorifie hem in her Lordshippes, sithe that thei by naturall condicion, been not lordes ouer thralles, but for that thraldome came firste by the deserte of sinne. And more ouer, there as the Lawe saieth, that temporell goodes of bonde folke, been the goodes of her Lorde: yea, that is for to vnderstonde, the goodes of the Emperour, to defende hem in her right, but not to robbe hem ne reue hem. Therefore saieth Seneca: Thy prudence should liue benignly with thy thralles. Those that thou calleſt thy thralles, been Goddes people: and for humble people been Christes frendes, thei been contuberniall with the Lordes.

Thinke also, that of soche seede as churles spring, of soche seede spring Lordes: As well may ỹ chorle be saued as the Lord. The same death that taketh the chorle, soche death taketh the Lorde. Wherefore I rede dooe right so with the chorle, as thou wouldeſt that thy lorde did with thee, if thou wer in his plight. Euery sinfull manne is a chorle to sinne: I rede thee Lorde certes, that thou werke in soche wise with thy chorles, that thei rather loue thee than dread thee. I wote well, that there is degree aboue degree, as reason is, and skill is that menne doe her deuour, there as it is due. But certes, extorcions, and dispite of your vnderlinges is dampnable.

And ferthermore vnderstande well, that these Conquerours or Tyrauntes, make full ofte thralles of hem, that been borne of as roiall blood, as been thei that hem conquere. This name of Thraldome was neuer erste knowe, till that Noe saied that his soonne Canam, should bee thrall to his brethren for his sinne. What saie we than of hem, that pil and doe extorcions to holie Churche: Certes, the swerd that menne yeue first to a knight, whan he is newe dubbed, signifieth that he should defende holie Churche, and not robbe and pill it, and who so doeth is Traitour to Christe. And as saieth sainct Augustine, thei been the Deuilles Wolues, that strangle the Shepe of Jesu Christe, and doen worse than Wolues, for sothely, whan the Wolue hath full his wombe, he stinteth to strangle shepe: But sothly, the pillours and destroiers of holie Churche goodes, ne doe not so, for thei ne stint neuer to pill. Now as I haue saied, sithe so is that sinne was first cause of thraldome, than is it thus, that at the time that all this worlde was in sin, than was all this worlde in thraldome, and in subiection, but certes, sithe the time of grace came, GOD ordained that some folke should bee more hie in estate and in degree, and some folke more lowe, and that eche should bee serued in his estate.

And therfore, in some countreis there thei bee thralles, whan thei haue tourned hem to the faithe, thei make her thralles free out of the thraldome: & therfore, certes the Lord oweth to his man, that the man oweth to the lorde. The Pope calleth himself seruaunt of the seruauntes of God, but for as the estate of holy Churche, ne might not haue been, ne the common profite might not haue be kept,

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ne peace ne reste in earth, but if God had ordained that some manne hath hier degre, and some menne lower: Therfore was souerainte ordained to kepe, maintaine, and defende her vnderlinges and her subiectes in reason, as fer forthe as it lieth in her power, and not to distroy ne confounde hem. Wherefore I saye, that those lordes that ben like woulues that deuour the possessions or the tattell of poore folkes wrōgfully, without mercy or mesure, they shall receiue by the same measure that they haue mesured to poore folke, the mesure of Jesu Christ but it be amended. Nowe cometh disceite betwixt marchaunt and marchaunt. And thou shalt vnderstond that marchaundise is in two maners, that one is bodily, and that other is ghostly: that one is honest and leful, and that other is dishonest and vnlefull. The bodely marchaundise that is lefull and honeste is this: that there as God hath ordained that a reigne or a countrie is suffisaunte to him selfe, than it is honest and lefull that of haboundaunce of this country, menne helpe an other countrie that is nedy: And therfore there muste be marchauntes to bring fro one countrie to that other her marchaundise. That other marchaundise that menne haunten with fraude, and trecherie, and disceite with leasinges and false othes, is righte cursed and dampnable. Espirituell Marchaundise is properly Simonie, that is ententife desire to bie any thing espirituell, that is a thinge, whiche apertaineth to the saintuarie of GOD, and to cure of the soule. This desire if so be that a manne do his diligence to perfourme it, all be it that his desire ne take none effect, yet it is to him a deedly sinne, and if he be ordred, he is irreguler. Certes Simonie is called of Simon magus, that would haue boughte for temporell cattel, the yefte that GOD had yeue by the holy ghost to Saint Peter, and to the Apostels: And therefore vnderstonde, that he that selleth and he that bieth thinges espirituels, ben called Simoniackes, be it by cattell be it by procuring or by fleshly praier of his frendes, fleshly frendes or espirituel frendes, fleshly in two maners, as by kinred or other frendes: Sothly if they praie for him that is not worthy and able, it is Simonie if he take the benefice, and if he bee worthy and able there is none. That other maner is whan man or woman praieth for folke to auaūce him onely for wicked fleshly affeccion which thei haue vnto the persons, and that is foule simonie. But certes in seruice, for whiche menne yeuen thinges espirituell vnto her seruauntes, it must be vnderstonde that the seruice muste be honest, or els not, and also that it be without bargeining, and that the person be able. For as saieth saint Damasen: All the sinnes of the worlde at regarde of this sinne are as thing of noughte, for it is the greatest sinne that maie be after the sinne of Lucifer and of Antichriste: For by this sinne GOD forleseth the Church and the Soule, whichhe bought with his precious bloode, by hem that yeue Churches to hem that been not worthy, for they put in theues hondes that steale the soules of Jesu Christe, and distroie his patrimonie. By suche vnworthy priestes and curates haue leude menne lesse reuerence of the Sacramentes of holy Church, and suche yeuers of churches put the children of christ out, and put in the Church the Diuels owne sonnes: thei sell the soules that lambes should kepe to the wolf which strangleth hem: and therfore shall they neuer haue parte of the pasture of lambes, that is the blisse of Heauen. Nowe cometh hasardrie with his apertenauntes, at tables and rafles, of whiche cometh disceite, false othes, chidinges, and all rauinesse blaspheminges, and reniynges of God; and hate of his neighbours, waste of goodes, mispendiuge of time, and sometime manslaughter. Certes hasardours ne mowe not be without greate sinne. Of Auarice cometh also lesinges, theft, false witnesse, and false othes: and ye shall vnderstonde that these be greate sinnes, and expresse ayenst the commaundementes of God, as I haue saide. False witnesse is in worde, and also in dede: In worde, as for to bireue thy neighebours good name by thy false witnesse, or bireue him his cattell or his heritage, by thy false witnessing, whan thou for ire or for mede, or for enuie, bearest false witnesse, or accusest him, or excuseth thy selfe falsely. Ware ye questmongers and notaries: certes for false witnessing was Susan in ful great sorow & paine, and many an other mo. The sin of theft is also expresse ayenst goddes hest, and in two maners, coporel and spirituel, the tēporell theft is: As for to take thy neibours cattell ayenst his will, be it by force or by sleight, be it by mette or by mesure: by stealinge also of false enditementes vpon him, and in borowing of thy neighbours cattel, in entent neuer to paye it ayen, and semblable thinges. Espirituel theft is sacrilege, that is to say, hurting of holy things sacred to christ

in two maners, by reson of the holy place, as churches or churche yerdes: For which euery vilainous sinne that men done in suche places, may be called sacrilege, or euery violence in the semblable places. Also thei that withdrawe falsely the rightes that longe to holy churche and plesing. And generally sacrilege is to reue holy thing fro holy place, or vnholy thing, out of holy place, or holy thinge out of vnholy place.

¶ Reuelacio contra peccatum Auaricie.

NOwe shall ye vnderstond, that releuing of Auarice is misericorde and pite largely taken. And menne might aske why that misericorde and pite are releuinge of Auarice: Certes the auaricious man sheweth no pite ne misericorde to the nedefull man.

For he deliteth him in the keping of his treasure, and nat in the rescuing ne releuing of his euin Christen. And therefore speake I first of misericorde. Than is misericorde (as saieth the Philosopher) A vertue, by whiche the corage of manne is stered, by the misease of him that is diseased. Upon whiche misericorde foloweth pite, in performing and fulfilling of charitable workes of mercy, helpeth and comforteth him that is miseased. And certes these thinges moue & stere a man to misericorde of Jesu Christe, that he yaue him selfe for our offence, and suffred death for misericorde, & foryaue vs our original sinnes, and therby released vs fro the paines of hell, and minished the paines of purgatory by penitens, and yeueth grace well to doe, and at laste the blisse of Heauen. The speces of misericorde been for to lene, and also for to yeue: for to foryeue and releace, and for to haue pite in herte and compassion of the mischiefe of his euen Christen, and also to chastise there as nede is. An other maner of remedy ayenst Auarice, is resonable largesse: but sothly here behoueth the consideracion of that grace of Jesu Christ, and of the temporell goodes, and also of the goodes perdurable that Jesu christ yafe to vs, and to haue remembraunce of the death whiche he shal receiue, he knoweth not whan, where, ne who: and also that he shall forgo all that he hath, saue onely that which he hath expended in good werkes.

But for as muche, as some folke been vnmesurable, menne oughte for to auoide and eschue folish largesse, the whiche some people call waste.

Certes, he that is foole large, yeueth not his cattell, but he leseth his cattell. Sothly what thing that he yeueth for veinglory, as to minstrels and to folke that beare his renome in the world, he hath sinne therof and none almesse: Certes he leseth foule his good that he ne seketh with ẏ yeft of his good nothing but sinne. He is like to an horse that seketh rather to drinke drouy or troubled water, than for to drinke water of the clere wel. To hem apperteinen the saide cursing, that Christ shall yeue at the daie of dome, to hem that shal be dampned.

Sequitur de Gula.

AFter Auarice cometh Gloteny, which is expresse ayenst the cōmaundement of God. Gloteny is vnmesurable appetite to ete or to drinke, or els to do inough to the vnmesurable appetite and disordeined couetise to eate or to drinke. This sinne corrupteth all this worlde, as is well shewed in the sinne of Adam and of Eue. Loke also what saieth saincte Poule of gloteny. Many (saith he) gon, of whiche I haue often said to you, and now I saye it weping, that been the enemies of the crosse of Christ, of whiche the ende is death, and of which her wombe is her God and her glorye, in confusion of hem that so deuour earthly thinges. He that is vsed to this sinne of Gloteny, he ne maie no sinne withstonde, he must bee in seruage of all vices, for it is the Deuils hourde, there he hideth and resteth him. This sinne hath manie speces: The firste is dronkenesse that is the horrible sepulture of mannes reason: and therefore whan a manne is dronke he hath loste his reason: And this is deedly sinne. But sothly whan that a manne is not wonte to stronge drinke, and parauenture ne knoweth not the strength of the drinke, or hath feblesse in his heed, or hath trauailed, through whiche he drinketh the more, all be he sodainly caught with drinke, it is no deedly sinne, but veniall. The second spece of gloteny is, that the spirite of a manne wexeth al troubled, for dronkennesse bireueth him the discrecion of his wit.

The thirde maner spece of Glotonie is whan a manne deuoureth his meate, and hath not right

right full maner of eating. The fowerth is, whan through the greate abundaunce of his meate, the humours in his body been distempered. The fifth is, forgetfulnesse by to moch drinking, for whiche sometime a man forgetteth er the morning, what he did on the euening before.

In other maner been distinct the speces of glotonie, after sainct Gregorie. The first is, for to eate before time to eate. The second is, whan a man giueth him to delicate meate, or drinke. The third is, whā men take to moche ouer measure. The fourth is, curiosite, with great entent to make a appareill his meate. The fifth is, for to eate to gredely.

These been the fiue fingers of the deuilles hond, by whiche he draweth folke to sinne.

¶ The remedie ayenst Glotonie.

Ayenst Glotonie, the remedie is abstinence, as saieth Galiene: but that I holde nat meritorious, if he do it for ỹ heale of his bodie. Sainct Augustine woll that abstinence be doen for vertue, and with pacience. Abstinence (saith he) is little worthe, but if a man haue good will thereto, and but if he be enforced by pacience and charite, and that men doe it for Goddes sake, and in hope to haue blisse in heauen.

The fellowes of abstinence bee attemperaunce, that holdeth the meane in all thinges. Also shame that eschueth al dishonestie. Sufficiaunce, that seketh no riche meates ne drinkes, ne doeth not force of outragious, appaireling of meate. Measure also, that restraineth by reason, the vnmeasurable appetite of eating. Sobernesse also, that restraineth the outrage of drinke. Sparing also, that restraineth the delicate ease, to sit longe at meate, wherfore some folke standen of her owne will whan thei eate, bicause thei woll eate at lesse leasure.

De luxuria.

After Glotonie cometh lecherie, for these twoo sinnes been so nighe cosins, that oft time thei wol nat depart. God wote this sin is full displeasant to God he forsaid himself: doe no lecherie. And therefore he putteth greate paines ayenst this sinne.

For in the old law, if a woman thrall were take in this sinne, she should bee beate with staues to death. And if she were a gentill woman, she should bee slain with stones. And if she were a Bishoppes doughter, she should be brent by Goddes commaundement.

More ouer by the sinne of Lecherie, God drowned all the worlde, and after that he brēt fiue citees with thunder and lightning, and sanke hem into hell.

Now let vs speake than of the said filthing sinne of Letherie, that menne call auoutrie of wedded folke, that is to saie, if that one of hem been wedded, or els bothe. Sainct Jhon saieth, that auouterers shall bee in hell, in a stanke brenning of fire and of Brimstone, for the stenche of the ordure: certes the breaking of this Sacramente, is an horrible thing: it was made of God himself in paradise, and confirmed by Jesu Christe, as witnesseth S. Mathew in the Gospell: A manne shall leue father and mother, and take him to his wife, and thei shall be two in one flesshe.

This Sacramente betokeneth the knitting together of Christe and holie Churche. And not onely that God forbade auoutrie in deede; but also he commaunded that thou shouldest not coueite thy neighbours wife. In this leste saieth sainct Augustine, is forboden all maner couetise to doe Letherie. Lo, what saieth sainct Mathewe in the Gospell, that who so seeth a woman, to couetise of his lustе, he hath doen Lecherie with her in his harte. Here maie ye see, that not onely the deede of this sinne is forboden, but also the desire to that sinne. This cursed sinne anoieth greuously hem that it haūt: and first to her soule, for he obligeth it to sinne, and to paine of death, whiche is perdurable. Vnto the bodie anoieth it greuously also, for it drieth him and wasteth, and shenteth him, and of his blood he maketh Sacrifice to the fend of helle: It wasteth his cattell and his substaunce. And certes, if it bee a foule thing, a manne to waste his cattell on women: yet it is a fouler thing, whan that for soche ordure women dispende vpon menne, her cattel and her substaunce. This sinne as saith the prophete, taketh from manne and woman, her good fame and her honour, and it is full delectable, and pleasant to the deuill. For therby winneth the more parte of this wretched worlde. And righte as a Marchaunte deliteth him moolte in that chaffare, whiche he

hath moste auauntage and profite of, right so deliteth the fende in this ordure.

This is that other honde of the deuill, with fiue fingers, to catche the people to his vilanie. The firste is the folisshe loking of the folisshe woman and of the folisshe man, that sleeth right as the Basilicock or cocatrice sleeth folke by venim of his sight, for the couetise of the eyen folo weth the couetise of the hart. The second finger is the vilanous touching in wicked maner. And therfore saieth Salamon: that who so toucheth and handeleth a woman, he fareth as the manne that handeleth the scorpion, which stingeth and sodainly sleeth through his enuemining; or as who so that toucheth warme pitch blemisheth his fingers. The thirde is foule wordes, whiche fareth like fire, whiche right anon brenneth the harte. The fourthe finger is the kissing: And truely he were a great foole that would kisse the mouthe of a brenninge ouen or of a fornels. And more fooles been they that kisse in vilanie, for that mouthe is the mouthe of hel, and namely these olde dotardes holours, whiche woll kisse and sicker, and belie hem self though thei maie nought do. Certes thei ben like to houndes: for an hounde whan he cometh nigh to the roser, or by other benches, thoughe so bee that they maie not pisse, yet woll he heue vp his legge and make a countenaunce to pisse. And for that manie manne weneth that he maie not sinne for no licorousnesse that he doth with his wife. Truely that opinion is false: GOD wote a manne maie slee him selfe with his owne knife, and make him selfe dronke with his owne tonne. Certes be it wife, be it childe, or any wordly thing, that he loueth before god, it is his maumette, and he is an idolaster. A manne should loue his wife by discrecion, paciently and attemperatly, and than is she as though it wer his suster: The fifthe finger of the Diuelles honde is the stinking dede of lechery. Truely thy fiue fingers of glotonie the Deuill putteth in to the wombe of a man: And with his fiue fingers of lecherye he gripeth him by the reines, for to throwe him into the fornels of Hell, there as they shall haue the fire and the wormes that euer shall laste, and weping and wailing, and sharpe hungre and thrust, grinnesse of Diuels, whiche shall all to trede hem withouten ende. Of lecherie as I saide sourdeth and springeth diuers speces: as fornication, that is betwene man and woman whiche bee not maried, and is deedly sinne; and ayenst nature: All that is enemie and distruccion to nature is ayenst nature. Perfaie the reason of a man telleth him wel also that it is deedly sinne, for as much as god forbade lecherie: And sainct Poule yeueth hem the reigne that nis dewe to no wight but to hem that done deedly sinne. Another sinne of lechery is to bireue a maides maidenhed, for he that dothe, certes he casteth a maiden out of the hiest degre that is in this presente life, and bireueth her that precious fruite that the boke calleth the hundreth fruites, I ne can saye it none other wise in Englisshe, but in Latin it highte (Centesimus fructus) Certes he that so doth is the cause of many damages and vilanies, mo than any manne can reken: righte as he is cause of many domages somtime that beestes doe in the felde, that breake the hedge or the closure through which he distroieth that maie not be restored: For certes no more maye maidenheed be restored, than an arme that is smitte fro the bodie, maie returne ayen and were: She maie haue mercy, this wote I well, if that she haue will to doe penitence, but neuer shall it be that she nas corrupte. And all be it so that I haue spoke somwhat of auoutry, also it is good to shewe the perilles that longe to auoutrie, for to eschewe that foule sinne. Auoutrie in latin is for to saie, approchinge of an other mannes bedde, through whiche those that sometime were one flesche, abondon her bodies to other persons. Of this sinne as saieth the wise man folowe many harmes: Firste breaking of faithe, and certes in faithe is the keye of christendome: and whan that faithe is broke and lorne, sothly christendom stont veine and withoute fruite. This sinne also theefte, for theefte generally is to reue a wight his thing ayenst his will. Certes, this is the foulest theft that may be, whan that a woman stealeth her body for her husbonde, and yeueth it to her holour to defoyle her, and stealeth her soule fro Christe, and yeueth it to the Deuill: This is a fouler theefte than for to breake a churche and steale away the chalice, for these auouterers breke the temple of God spirituelly, and steale the vessell of grace that is the bodie and the soule: for whiche Christe shall distroy hem, as saieth saint Poule. Sothely of this theefte douted greatly Joseph, whan that his Lordes wife prayed him of vilanie, whan he saide: Lo my Lady howe my Lorde hath take to me vnder my warde, all that he hath in this world, ne nothing of his thinges

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is out of my power, but onely ye that be his wife: and howe should I than doe this wickednesse and sinne so horrible ayenste God, and ayenst my lorde, God it forbede. Alas, all to litell is suche trouthe nowe founde. The thirde harme is the filth, through which thei breake the commaundement of God, and defoile the auter of matrimonie, that is Christ. For certes, in so muche as the Sacrament of mariage is so noble and so digne, so muche is it greater sin for to breake it: For God made mariage in paradise in the estate of innocencie, to multiplie mankinde in the seruice of God, and therfore is the brekinge thereof the more greuous, of whiche breking come falfe heires oft time, that wrongfully occupie folkes heritages: and therfore woll Christ putte hem out of the reigne of heauen, that is heritage to good folke. Of this brekinge cometh also oft time that folke vnware wedde or sin with her owne kinrede: and namelye these harlottes that haunte bordels of these foule women, that maie be likened to a commune gonge, where as menne pourge her ordure. What saie we also of putours, that liue by the horrible sinne of putrie, and constreine women to yeue to hem a certaine rente of her bodely puterie, yea somtime of his own wife or his childe, as done these baudes: Certes, these ben cursed sinnes. Understond also that auoutrie is sette gladly in the ten commaundementes bitwene thefte and manslaughter, for it is the greatest thefte that maie be, for it is thefte of bodie and of soule, and it is like to homicide for it kerueth a two and breketh a two hem that firste were made of one flesh. And therefore by the olde lawe of GOD they should be slaine, but natheleffe by the lawe of Jesu Christ, that is law of pite, whan he said to the woman that was founde in auoutrie, and should haue be slaine with stones after the will of the Jewes, as was her lawe: So said Jesu Christ, and haue no more will to do sinne. Sothely the vengeaunce of auoutrie is awarded to the paines of Hell, but if so be that it be disturbed by penitence. Yet been there mo speces of this cursed sinne, as whan that one of hem is religious or elfs bothe, or of folke that been entred into orde, as subdeaken, Deaken, or Prieste, or hospitaliers. And euer the hier that he is in orde, the greater is the sinne. The thinges that greatly agredge her sinne is the breking of her auowe of chastite whan they receiued the order. And more ouer sothe is that holy order is chefe of all the tresorie of GOD and his especiall signe and marke of chastite, to shew that they been ioyned to chastite, whiche is the moste precious life that is: and these ordred folke ben specially titled to God and of the speciall meine of GOD, for whiche whan they doen deedly sinne they ben the traitours of GOD and of his people, for they liue of the people. Prieftes ben Jungelles as by the dignite of her misterie, but forsoth saint Poule saieth, that Sathanas transfourmeth him in an Jungell of lighte. Sothely the Priefte that haunteth deedly sinne he may be likened the Jungell of darkenesse, transfourmed in the Jungell of light, he semeth Jungell of light, but forsoth he is Jungell of darknesse. Such Prieftes be the sonnes of Hely, as sheweth in the booke of Kinges, that they were the sonnes of Beliall, that is the Diuell. Beliall is to saie without iudge, and so fare they, hem thinketh they be free and haue no iudge, no more than hath a free bulle that taketh whiche Cowe that him liketh in the toune. So fare thei by women, for right as one fre Bull is inough for all a toune, right so is a wicked Priest corruption inough for all a parishe, or for al a countrey: These Prieftes, as saith the boke, ne cã not minister the misterie of priesthode to the people, ne they know not GOD, they ne helde hem not apayed, as saieth the boke, of sodden flesshe that was to hem offred, but they toke by force the flesh that was raw. Certes, so these shrewes ne helde hem not apayed of rosted and sodde flesshe, with whiche the people fedde hem in great reuerence, but they woll haue rawe flesshe of folkes wiues and her doughters; and certes these women that cõsent to her harlotry don great wrong to Christ and to holy Churche, all Halowes, and all Soules, for they bireue all these hem that should worship CHRIST and holy Churche, and praie for christen Soules, and therfore haue suche Prieftes and her lemans also that consent to her lecherie, the curfing of all the courte christien, till they come to amendement. The thirde spece of auoutrie is somtime betwixt a manne and his wife, and that is whan they take no regarde in her assembling, but onely to her fleshly delite, as saith saint Jerome, and ne reken of nothing but that they ben assembled bicause they ben maried, all is good inoughe, as they thinke: but in suche folke hath the Diuell power, as said the angell Raphaell to Tobie, for in her assembling they put Jesu Christe out of her

herte, and yeue hem selfe to all ordure. The fourthe spece is the assemble of hem that ben of one affinite, or els of hem, with which her fathers or her kinred haue dealed in the sin of lecherie: This sinne maketh hem like to houndes, that take no kepe to kinrede. And certes parentele is in two maners: eyther ghostly or fleshly: ghostly as for to deale with his godsib, for right so as he that engendreth a childe is his fleshly father, righte so is his Godfather his father espirituell: for whiche a woman may in no lesse sinne assemble with her Godsib, than with her owne fleshly brother. The fifthe spece is that abhominable sinne, of whiche abhominable sinne no man ought speake ne write, natheless it is openly rehersed in holy writ. This cursed sinne doen menne and women in diuers entent and in diuers maner: But though that holy writte speke of horrible sinne, certes holy writte maie not be defoiled, no more than the sunne that shineth on the donghill. An other sin apperteineth to lechery that cometh sleping, and this sinne cometh often to hem that been maidens, and also to hem that bee corrupt, and this sinne menne cal Polucion, that commeth of three maners: Somtime of languissching of bodie, for the humours been to ranke and habūdaunt in the body of man, somtime of infirmite, for feblenesse of the vertue retentife, as physike maketh mencion: Somtime for surfet of meate and drinke, and somtime of vilainous thoughtes that been enclosed in mannes minde whan he goeth to slepe, whiche maie not be without sinne, for whiche menne muste kepe hem wisely, or els maie men sinne ful greuously.

¶ Remedium contra peccatum luxurie.

AGe cometh the remedie ayenst lechery, and that is generally chastite and continence, that restrayne all disordinate meuinges that come of fleshely talentes. And euer the greater merite shal he haue that most restreineth the wicked chaulinges of the ordour of this sin, and this is in two maners: That is to saie, chastice in mariage, and chastise in widowhede. Nowe shalte thou understonde that matrimony is leful assembling of man and woman that receiuen by vertue of this Sacrament, the bonde through whiche they maie not be departed in all her life, that is to say, while that thei liue bothe. This, as saieth the boke, is a ful great sacrament, god made it as I haue said in paradise, and wold himselfe be borne in mariage: and for to halowe mariage he was at a weddinge, where as he tourned water into wine, whiche was the first miracle that he wrought in earth before his disciples. Trewe effecte of mariage clenseth fornication and replenissheth holy church of good linage, for that is the ende of mariage, and chaūgeth deedly sinne into beniall sin, bitwene hem that ben wedded, and maketh the hertes as one of hem that been wedded, as well as the bodies.

Every mariage was established by God, er that sinne began, whan naturall lawe was in his right pointe in Paradise. And it was ordained that o man shoulde haue but o woman, and o woman but o man, as saith saint Augustin, by many reasons.

First, for mariage is figured betwix Christ and holy churche.

An other is for a man is heed of a woman, alway by ordinaunce it should be so. For if a woman had mo menne than one, than should she haue mo heedes than one, and that were a right horrible sinne before God, and also a woman might not please so many folke at ones: and also there should neuer be reste ne quiete amōg hem, for eche of hem would aske her owne righte. And furthermore, no manne should knowe his owne engendrure, ne who shoulde haue his heritage, and the woman should be the lesse beloued.

Now cometh how that a man should bere him with his wife, and namely in two thinges: that is to saye, in sufferaunce and reuerence, as shewed Christe whan he firste made woman. For he ne made her of the heed of Adam, for he should nat claime to great lordshippe, for there as the woman hath the maistrie, she maketh to muche variaunce, there nede no mo ensamples of this, the experience all day, ought inough suffice.

Also certes, god ne made not woman of the foote of Adam, for she should not be holde to lowe, for she cannot paciently suffre: but God made woman of the ribbe of Adam, for woman should be felow vnto man.

Man should beare him to his wife in faith, in trouth, and in loue (as saith sainte Poule) that a man should loue his wife, as Christ loueth holy church, that loued it so wel that he

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died for it: So should a man for his wife, if it were nede.

Now how that a woman should bee subiect to her husebande: that telleth S. Peter, first in obedience. And also as saieth the Decr: a woman that is a wife, as long as she is a wife, she hath none auctority to sweare ne beare witnesse, without leaue of her housebande, that is her Lorde, alwaie he should be so by reason. She should also serue him in al honeste, and be attemperate of her arraie.

I woll well that thei should set her entent to please her husbōdes, but nat by queintise of her arraie. Saincte Jerom saieth: wiues that be apparelled in silke & precious purple, ne mowe not cloth hem in Jesu Christe. S. Gregorie saieth also: ỹ no wight seeketh precious array, but onely for vainglory to be honoured the more of the people. It is a greate folie, a womā to haue great arraie outward, and in her self be foule inward. A wife should also bee measurable in looking, in bearing, and in laughing, and discrete in all her wordes & her deedes, and aboue all worldly thinges, she should loue her husbande with al her hart, and to him be true of her body: so should an husbonde be to his wife: For sith that all the body is the husbondes, so should her hart be, or els ther is betwixt hem two, as in that no perfite mariage. Than shal menne vnderstonde, that for three thinges, a manne and his wife fleshely maie assemble. The firste is, for thentent of engendrure of children, to the seruice of God, for certes, that is the cause final of matrimonie. An other cause is, to yelde eche of hem to other, the debtes of her bodies for neither of hem hath power ouer her own bodies. The thirde is, for to eschue lecherie and vilanie. The fowerth is, for loth deadly sinne. As to the first is meritorie: the second also, for as saith the Decre, that she hath merite of chastite, that yeldeth to her husbonde the debte of her bodie, ye though it bee ayenst her liking, and the lust of her hart. The third maner is veniall sinne, and truely scarcely maie any of these be without veniall sinne, for the corrupcion and for the delite. The fowerth maner is for to vnderstonde, if thei assemble onely for amorous loue, and for none of the forsaied causes, but for to accomplishe the brenning delite, thei recke not how ofte, sothely it is deedly sinne: and that with sorowe, some folke woll pain hem more to doe, than to her appetite suffiseth.

The second maner of chastite, is for to be a cleane widowe, and eschue the enbraslinges of a mā, & desire the enbraling of Jesu Christ These been those that haue been wiues, and haue forgot her husbondes, and also women that haue doen lecherie, and been receiued by penitēce. And certes, if that a wife could kepe her all chaste, by licence of her housebande, so that she yeue neuer none occasion that he offende, it wer to her a great merite. This maner of women that obserueth chastite, in clothing and in countenaunce, abstinent in eating and drinking, in speaking, and in deede, she is the vessell or ỹ bore of the blessed Magdelain, that fulfilleth holy Churche of good odour. The thirde maner of chastite is virginite, and it behoueth that she be holy in hart, and cleane of bodie, than is she spouse of Jesu Christ, and she is the lise of Aungels: she is the praising of this world, and she is as these martyrs in regaly: she hath in her, that tongmaie not tel, ne harte thinke. Virginite bare our lorde Jesu Christ, & virgin was himself.

An other remedie against lecherie, is specially to withdraw we soche thinges, as yeue occasion to that vilanie: as ease, eating, & drinking: for certes, whan the pot boileth strongly, the best remedie is to withdraw we the fire. Sleping long in greate quiet, is also a great nourice to Lecherie.

An other remedie ayenst lecherie is that a manne or a woman eschue the companie of hem, by whiche he doubteth to bee tempted: For all be it so that the deede is withstonde, yet is there great tēptacion. Sothly, a white wall, although it ne brenne not fully, by slicking of the Candell, yet is the wall blacke of the flame. Full oft time I rede, that no man trust in his owne perfection, but he be stronger than Sampson, or holier than Daniell, or wiser than Salomon.

Now after that I haue declared you as I can, the seuen deadly sinnes, and some of her braunches, with her remedies. Sothly if I could, I would tell you the ten commaundementes, but so hie doctrine I put to diuines. Nathlesse I hope to God, thei been touched in this treatise eche of hem.

Sequitur secunda pars penitentie.

NOw for asmoche as the second part of penitence, stonte in confession of mouth, as I began in the first cap. I saie saint Augustine saieth: Sin is euery worde and euery deede, and all that

men coniect ayenst the lawe of Jesu Christe, and this is for to sinne in harte, in mouthe, and in deede, by the fiue wittes, whiche been sight, hearing, smelling, tasting or sauoure, and feling. Now is it good to vnderstande, that that agregeth moch euery sinne. Thou shalte consider what thou art that dooest the sinne, whether thou be male or female, young or old, gentill or thrall, free or seruaunt, hole or sicke, wedded or single, ordred or vnordred, wise or foole, clerke or seculer, if she be of thy kinrede bodily or ghostly, or no, if any of thy kinrede haue sinned with her or no, and many mo thinges.

An other circumstaunce is this, whether it be doen in fornicacion or in aduoutrie or no, in maner of homicide or no, horrible greate sinnes or smalle, and howe longe thou hast continued in sinne. The thirde circumstaunce is, the place there thou hast doen sin, whether in other mennes houses, or in thine own, in field, in church or in churchyarde, in churche dedicate or no. For if the churche be halowed, and man or woman spill his kinde within that place, by waie of sinne or wicked temptacio, the churche is enterdited, and the priest that did soche a vilanie, the tearme of all his life, ye should no more sing Masse, and if he did, he should doe dedly sinne, at euery time that he so long Masse. The fowerth circumstaunce is, by whiche mediatours or by whiche messangers, or for enticemente, or for consentment, to beare companie with fellowshippe. For many a wretche for to beare companie, woll go to the deuill of hell. Wherfore, thei that egge or consente to the sinne, been parteners of the sinne, and of the temptacio of the sinner. The fifth circumstaunce is, how many times that he hath sinned, if it be in his minde, and how oft he hath fallen. For he that oft falleth in sinne, he dispiseth the mercie of God, and encreaseth his sinne, and is vnkinde to Christe, and he weyeth the more feble to withstande sinne, and sinneth the more lightly, and the later riseth, and is more slowe to shriue him, and namely to him that is his confessour. For whiche that folke whan thei fall ayen to her olde folies, either thei leaue their old confessour, or els thei depart her shrifte in diuers partes. But sothly soche departed shrifte, deserueth no mercie of God for her sinnes. The sixte circumstaunce is, why that a man sinneth as by temptacio: and of him self procure that temptacion, or by the exciting of other folke, or if he sin with a woman by force or by her assente, or if the woman maugre her hed, haue bee a forced or none. This shall she tell, whether it were for couetise of pouerte, or if it were by her procurremente or no, and soche other thinges. The seuenth circumstaunce is, in what maner he hath doe his sinne, or how that he hath suffred that folke haue doe to her. And thesame shall the manne tell plainly, with all the circumstaunces, & whether he hath sinned with common bordell women or none, or doen his sinne in holy times or none, in fasting time or none, or before his shrift, or after his latter shrifte, and hath parauenture broke thereby his penaunce enioyned, by whose helpe or whose counsaile, by sorcery or craft, all must be tolde, and al these thinges after as thei be great or smale and grudge the conscience of manne or woman. And eke the priest that is thy iudge, maye the better be auised of his iudgement in yeuing of penaunce, and that is after thy contricion. For vnderstonde well that after time that a man hath defoiled his baptime by sinne, if he wol come to saluacio there is none other waie but by penaunce, shrifte, and satisfaction, and namely by thei two, if there be a confessour to whom he maie shriue him, and the thirde if he haue life to performe it. Than shall a man loke and consider, that if he woll make a trew and a profitable confession, there must be foure condicions. First it must be in sorowfulnesse of hert, as saith the king Ezechiell to God, I wol remembre me all the yeres of my life in bitternesse of my herte. This condicion of bitternesse hath fiue signes. The first is, that confession must be shamefast, not for to couer ne hide her sinne, for he hath offended his lorde God and defoiled his soule. And herof saith S. Augustin: The hert traueileth for shame of his sinne, and for he hath great shamefastnesse he is worthy to haue gret mercy of god, whiche was the confession of the Publican, that would nat heaue vp his eyen to heauen for he had offended God of heauen: for which shamefastnesse he had anon the mercy of god. And therof saith saint Augusten: that suche shamful folke be nirte forgyeuenesse a mercy.

An other signe is humilite in confession of whiche saith saint Peter: Humbleth you vnder the might of GOD: the honde of God is strong in confession, for therby god forgyeueth thee thy sinnes, for he alone hath the power. And this humilite shal be in hert, and in outwarde signes: For right as he hath humilite

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to God in his hert, right so shoulde he humble his body outwarde to the preest, that sitteth in goddes stede. For which in no maner, sith that Christ is soueraine, and the preest mean and mediatour betwixt Christ & the sinner, & the sinner is lesse by waie of reason. Than should not the sinner sitte as hie as his confessour, but knele before him or at his fete, but if sickenesse cause it: for he shall not take hede who sitteth there, but in whose place he sitteth. A manne that hath trespassed to a Lorde, and cometh to aske mercie and make his accorde, and sitteth him doune by him, men would holde him outragious, and not worthie so soone for to haue remission of his trespace.

The thirde signe is, howe thy shrift should be full of teares if thou maie, and if thou maie not wepe with thy bodily eyen, than wepe in thine herte, whiche was the confession of saint Peter. For after that he had forsake Jesu Christ, he went out and wepte ful bitterly.

The fourth signe is, that thou ne lette not for shame to shewe thy confession: Such was the confession of Magdalein, that ne spared for no shame of hem that were at the feest, to go to our lord Jesu christ and beknow to him her sinnes. The fifthe signe is, that a manne or a woman be obeisaunte to receiue the penaunce that hem is enioyned. For certes Jesu Christ, for the offences of man was obedient to death. The seconde condicion of very confession is, that it be haskely done. For certes, if a man had a deedly wounde, euer the lenger that he tarieth to heale him self, the more would it corrupt and haste him to his death, and also the wounde would be the worse for to hele. And right so fareth sinne, that longe time is in a manne vnshewed. Certes a man oughte haskely shewe his sinnes for manie causes, as for drede of death, that cometh oft sodainly, and no certaine what time it shall be, ne in what place, and also the drenching of o sinne draweth in an other: and also the lenger that he tarieth the farther he is fro Christ. And if he abide to his last daie, scarcely maie he shriue him or remembre him of his sinnes, or repente for the greuous malady of his death And for as muche as he ne hath in his life herkened Jesu Christ whan he hath spoken, he shall crie to Jesu Christ at his last daie, and scarcely woll he herken him. And vnderstonde that this condicion muste haue four thinges.

Thy shrifte must be prouided before and auised, for wicked hast doth no profite, if a mā shriue him of his sinnes: best of pride, or enuy, and so forth with the speces and circumstaunces of sinne: And that he haue comprehended in his minde the nombre and greatnesse of his sinnes, and howe longe he hath lien in sinne. And also that he hath be cōtrite for his sinnes, and in stedfast purpose (by the grace of God) neuer ayen to fal to sinne. And also that he drede and counterfaite himselfe that he flie the occasion of sinne, to whiche he is enclined. Also thou shalt shriue thee of all thy sinnes to o manne, and nat parte to o manne and parte to another. That is to vnderstonde, in entent to departe thy confession for shame or drede, for it is but strangling of thy soule. For certes Jesu Christ is entierly all good in him is none imperfection, and therfore ether he forgeueth al perfitely, or els neuer a deale. I saie nat that if thou be assigned to thy penitencer for certaine sin that thou arte bounde to shewe him all the remenant of thy sinnes, of whiche thou haste be shriuē of thy curate, but if it like to the of thy humilite, this is no parte of thy shrift. Ne I say not there as I speake of diuision of confession, that if thou haue licence to shriue the liketh, and by licence of thy curate, that thou ne maieste well shriue thee to him of all thy sinnes. Lette no sinne be vntolde as ferre as thou haste remembraunce. And whan thou shalt be shriuen to thy curat, tell him all thy sinnes that thou hast do sithe thou were last shriuen. This is no wicked entent of diuision of shrifte.

Also the very shrift asketh certaine condicions. Firste that thou shriue the by thy free will, nat constrained for shame of sothe, sickenesse, ne such other thinges. For it is reason, that he that trespaceth by his free will, that by his free will he confesse his trespace, and that none other man tel his sin but himself, ne he shal nat nay ne deny his sin, ne wrathe him ayenst the preest for amonesshing him to leaue his sin. The seconde condition is that thy shrift be lawfull, that is to saie, that thou shriuest the. And also the preest that hereth thy confession be verely in the faithe of holy churche, and that a man ne be not dispeired of the mercy of Jesu Christe, as Caim or Judas. And also a man must accuse him selfe of his owne trespace & not an other, but he shal blame and wite him selfe and his owne malice of his sinne: and none other: But nathe-

lesse

les, if ỹ an other man be occasion or enticer of his sinne, or the estate of a person be soche by whiche his sinne is agredged, or els that he maie not plainly shriue him, but he tel the persone with whiche he hath sinned, than maie he tell, so that his entente ne bee not to backbite the persone, but onely to declare his confession.

Thou ne shalt not also make no lesinges in thy confession for humilite, parauenture, to saie that thou hast commised & doen soche sinnes, as of which ỹ thou ne wer neuer giltie. For sainct Augustin saith, if that thou bi cause of thine humilite, makest lesinges on thy self, though thou wer not in sinne before yet arte thou than in sinne through thy lesing. Thou must also shewe thy sinne, by thin owne proper mouth, but thou be dombe, and not by no letter: for that thou haste doen the sinne, shalt haue the shame therefore. Thou shalt not eke paint thy confession, with faire subtell woordes, to couer the more thy sinne: for than begilest thou thy self, & nat the priest thou must tell it plain, be it neuer so foule ne horrible. Thou shalt also shriue the to a priest that is discrete to counsaile thee, and also thou shalte not shriue thee for vainglorie, ne for ipocrisie, ne for no cause, but onely for the loue and fear of Jesu Christ, and heale of thy soule. Thou shalt nat also ren to the priest sodainly, to tell him lightly thy sinne, as who saith, to tell a iape or a tale, but auisedly and with good deuociō: and generally shriue thee ofte, if thou ofte fall, ofte arise by confession. And though thou shriue thee ofter than ones of the sinne, whiche thou haste be shriuen of, it is the more merite. And as saith sainct Augustine, thou shall haue the more lightly foryeuenesse and grace of GOD, bothe of sinne and pain. And certes ones a yere at least, it is lawfull to be houseled, for surely ones a yere all thinges renouellen.

Now haue I tolde you of verie confession, that is the second part of penitence.

Explicit secunda pars penitentie:
Et sequitur tertia pars.

The thirde part of penitence is Satisfaction, and that stonte most generally in almose dede and bodily paine. Now been there three maner of almose. Contricion of harte, where a man offreth himself to God. An other is, to haue pite of defaute of his neighboure. And the third is, in giuing of good counsaile, ghostly and bodily, where as men haue nede, and namely in sustenaunce of mannes fode. And take hepe that a man hath nede of these thinges generally, he hath neede of foode of clothing, and of herbory we: he hath nede of charitable counsaile, visiting in prison: in sickenesse, and sepulture of his bodie. And if thou maiest not visite the nedefull in prison in thy person, visite hem with thy message & yeftes. These ben generally the almose & workes of charitie, of hem that haue temporel richesse, or discreciō in counsailing. Of these workes shalt thou heare at the the daie of dome.

These almose shalt thou doe of thine own proper thinges, and hastely & priuely if thou maiest: but natheless, if thou maiest nat doe it priuely, thou shalt not forbeare to doe almose though men see it, so that it be not doe for thanke of the worlde, but only for thanke of Jesu Christ. For as witnesseth sainct Mathewe. Capi. v. A citee maie not bee hid that is set on a mountaine, ne men light nat a laterne, to put it vnder a bushell, but set it vpō a condilsticke, to yeue light to menne in the hous. Right so shull your light, light before menne, that thei maie se your good workes, and glorifie our father that is in heauen.

Now as to speake of bodily pain, it stont in praiers, waking, fasting, vertuous teaching of orisons. And ye shall vnderstonde, that orisons, or praiers, is to saie, a pitous will of hart, that setteth it in God, and expresseth by worde outward to remeue harmes, and haue thinges spirituell and perdurable, and somtime temporell thinges. Of whiche orisons certes in the orision of the Pater noster: hath Jesu Christ enclosed moste thinges. Certes it is priuileged of three thinges in his dignite, for whiche it is more digne than any other praier, for that Jesu Christe himself made it, and it is short, for it should be learned ỹ more lightly, and to hold it the more easie in hart, and helpe himself the ofter with that orison: And for a man should be the lesse wery to say it, and nat excuse him to lerne it, it is so short and easie, and for it comprehendeth in it self, all good praiers. The expolicion of this holie praier, that is so excellente and digne, I refer to the maisters of theologie, saue thus mochе wol I saie, that whan thou praiest, that God should foryeue thee thine offēces, as thou foryeuest hem that haue offended thee: bee well ware that thou bee nat out of charite. This

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holie oꝛison aminisheth also veniall sin, and therfoꝛe it apperteineth specially to penitẽce

This pꝛaier musse bee truely saied, and in parfite faith, and that men pꝛaie to god oꝛdinatly, discretely, and deuoutly, and alwaie a maine shall put his will, to be subiect to the will of God. This oꝛison must also bee saied with greate humblesse, and full pure and honestly, and not to the anoiaunce of any man oꝛ womain. It must also bee continued with the wꝛithes of charite. It auaileth also ayenst the vices of the soule: foꝛ as saieth S. Jerom by fasting been saued the vices of the fleashe, and by pꝛaier the vices of the soule.

After this thou shalt vnderstonde, that bodily pꝛaier stont in waking. Foꝛ Jesu Chꝛiste saieth: wake ye and pꝛaie, that ye ne entre into wicked temptacion. Ye shull vnderstonde also, that fasting stont in thꝛe thinges: in foꝛbearing of bodily meate and dꝛinke, in foꝛbering of woꝛldely iolite, and in foꝛbearing of deadly sinne: this is to saie, that a man shall kepe him fro dedly sinne with all his might.

And thou shalt vnderstonde also, that God oꝛdained fasting, and to fasting partaineth lower thinges. Largenesse to pooꝛe folke, gladnesse of harte spirituell: nat to be angrie ne anoied, ne grutche foꝛ he fasteth, and also reasonable houre to eate by measure, that is to saie, a man shall not eate in vntime, ne sit the lenger at the table foꝛ he fasteth.

Than shalt thou vnderstonde, that bodily pain stont in discipline, oꝛ teaching by woꝛde oꝛ wꝛiting, oꝛ by ensample. Also in wearing of heer oꝛ stamin, oꝛ of habergeons on her naked fleshe foꝛ Chꝛistes sake, and that soch maner penaunces, ne make nat thine harte bitter oꝛ angrie, ne anoied of thy self, foꝛ better is to cast awaie thin heer, than to cast awaie the sweteneſſe of Jesu Chꝛiste. And therefoꝛe saieth saincte Poule: clothe you, as thei that been chosen of God in hart, of misericoꝛde, debonairte, suffraunce, and soche maner of clothing, of whiche Jesu Chꝛist is moꝛe pleased than with the heeres oꝛ herbergeons.

Than is discipline also in knocking of thy breast, in scourging with roddes, in kneling, in tribulacion, in suffring paciẽtly wꝛonges that been doen to thee, and also in paciẽt suffring of sickenesse, oꝛ leſing of woꝛldly goodes oꝛ cattell, oꝛ wife, child, oꝛ other frendes.

Than shalt thou vnderstond, whiche thinges disstourbe penaunce, and that is in fower maners, dꝛeade, shame, hope, and wanhope, that is disperacion. And foꝛ to speake first of dꝛede, foꝛ whiche he weneth that he maie suffre no penaunce. There ayenst is remedy, foꝛ to thinke that bodily penaunce, is but shoꝛte and little, at regard of the pain of hell, that is so cruell and so longe, that it lasteth without ende.

Now ayenst the shame that a man hath to shꝛiue him, and namely these Ipocrites, that would bee holde so parfite, that thei haue no nede to shꝛiue hem. Ayenst that shame should a man thinke, that by waie of reason, that he that hath nat bee ashamed to doe foule thinges, certes him ought not bee ashamed, foꝛ to doe faire thinges, and that is confessions. A manne should also think, that God seeth and knoweth all his thoughtes, and all his werkes: to him maie nothing be hid ne couered. Men should also remember hem of the shame that is to come at the daie of dome, to hem that be nat penitent, and shꝛiuen in this pꝛesent life: foꝛ al the creatures in yearth and in hell shall see apertly, all that thei hid in this woꝛlde.

Now foꝛ to speake of the hope of hem, that been so negligente and slowe to shꝛiue hem: that stondeth in twoo maners. That one is, that he hopeth foꝛ to liue lõg, and foꝛ to purchase moche richesse foꝛ his delite, and than he woll shꝛiue him: And as he saieth, him semeth than timely inough to come to shꝛifte. An other is, of surquidꝛie that he hath in Chꝛistes mercie. Ayenst the first vice, he shall thinke that our life is in no sikernesse, and also that all the riches in this woꝛlde been in aduẽture, and passe as a shadowe on the wal. And as saieth saincte Gregoꝛie, that it apparteineth to the greate right wisenesse of God, that neuer shall the paine stinte of hem, that neuer would withdꝛawe hem fro sinne her thankes, but euer cõtinued in sinne: foꝛ that perpetuall will to dooe sinne, shall thei haue perpetuall paine. Wanhope is in twoo maners. The first wanhope is, in the mercie of God. That other is, that thei think that thei ne might not long perseuer in goodnes.

The firste wanhope cometh of that, he demeth that he hath sinned so greatly and so oft, and so long lien in sinne, that he shal not be saued. Certes ayenst that cursed wanhape should he thinke, that the Passion of Jesu Chꝛiste, is moꝛe strong foꝛ to vnbinde, than sinne is strong foꝛ to binde. Ayenst the second wanhope he shall thinke, that as often as he falleth, he maie rise again by penitence: and though he neuer so long hath lien in sinne,

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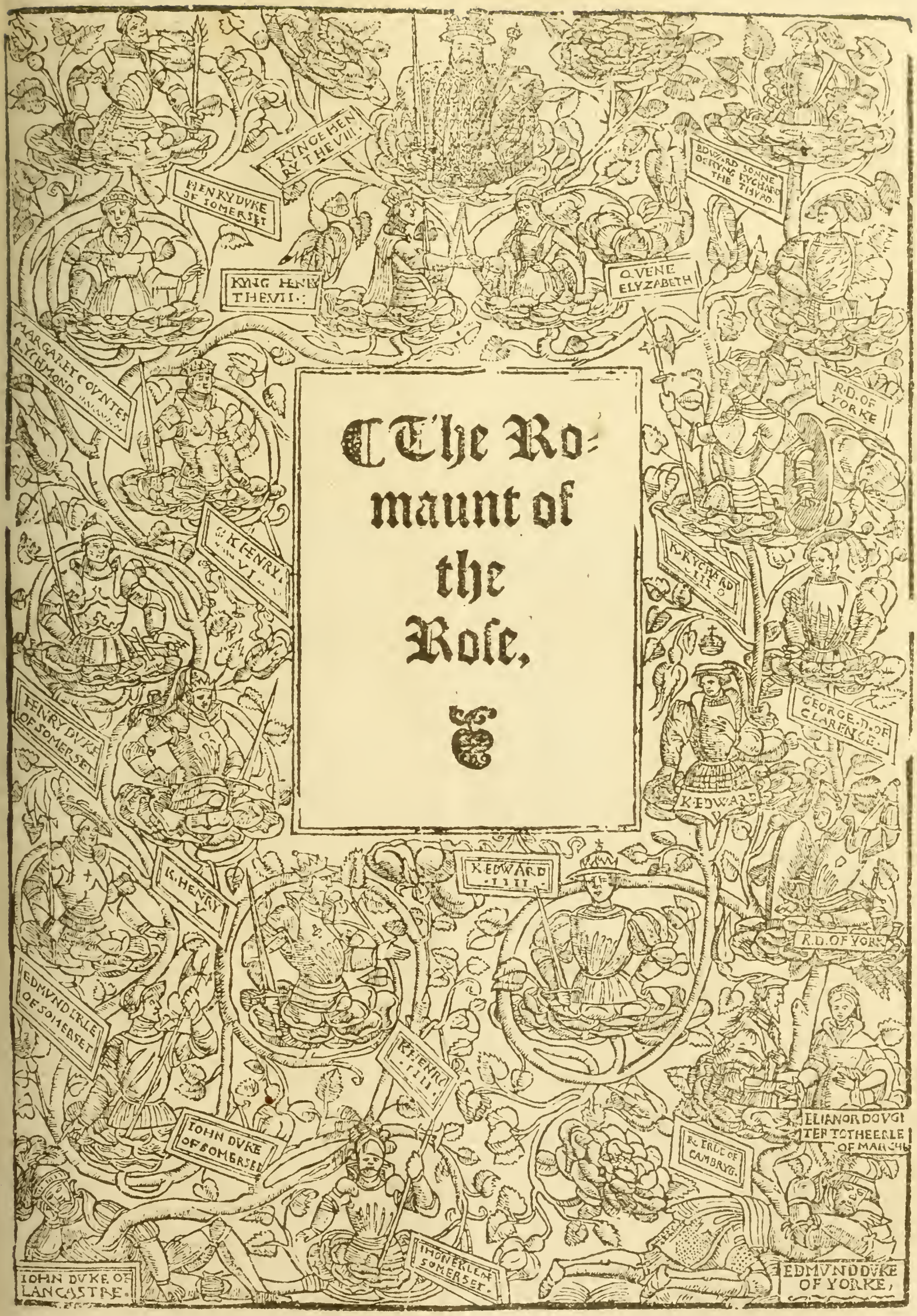
the mercie of Christ is alwaie redy to receiue him to mercie. Ayenst the Manhope that he demeth he should not long perseuer in goodnesse, he shall thinke that the feblenesse of the deuill maie nothing doe, but if men wol suffre him, and also he shall haue strength of the helpe of Jesu Christ, and of all holy churche, and the protection of angels, if him list.

Than shall men vnderstonde, what is the fruict of penaunce, and after the woordes of Jesu Christ, it is an endlesse blisse of heauen. There ioie hath neuer ende, no contrarie of wo ne greuaunce: there all harmes been passed of this presente life, there as is the sikernesse fro the paine of hell, there as is the blisfull companie, that reioice hem euer mo, eueriche of others ioye: there as the body of man that sometime was foule and derke, is more clere than the Sunne: there as the body that somtime was sicke, freile, and feble, and mortall, is immortall, and so strōg and hole, that there ne maie nothing appeire it: there as is neither hunger, thruste, ne colde, but euery soule replenished with the sight of the parfit knowing of God. This blisfull reigne maie men purchace by pouerte espirituell, and the glorie by lownesse, the plente of ioie by hungre and thrust, and the reste by traueile, and the life by death, and mortificacion of sinne: to whiche life he vs bring, that bought vs with his precious bloodde. Amen.

¶ Here endeth the Parsons tale.

¶ Thus endeth the booke of Caunterburie tales. And hereafter foloweth the Romaunt of the Rose.

The Romaunt of the Rose,



Many menne saine that in
sweueninges
Ther nis but fables and
lesinges
But menne maie some
sweuen sene
Whiche hardely that false
ne bene
But afterwarde ben apparaunt
This maie I drawe to warraunt
In authour that hight Macrobes
That halte not dremes false ne lees
But bndoth bs the auisioun
That whilom mette king Cipioun
And who so saith, or weneth it be
Iape or els nicete
To wene that dremes after fal
Let who so liste a fole me cal
For this trowe I, and say for me
That dremes significaunce be
Of good and harme to many wightes
That dremen in her slepe a nightes
Full many thinges couertly
That fallen after all openly
Within my twenty yere of age
Whan that loue taketh his corage
Of yonge folke, I went soone
To bed, as I was wont to done
And fast I slepte, and in sleping
Me mette suche a sweuening
That liked me wonders wele
But in that sweuen is neuer a dele
That it nis afterwarde befal
Right as this dreme wol tell bs al.
Now this dreme wol I rime a right
To make your hertes gay and light
For loue it praieth, and also
Commaundeth me that it be so
And if there any alke me
whether that it be, he or she
How this booke, whiche is here
Shal hate, that I rede you here
It is the Romaunt of the Rose
In whiche all the arte of loue I close.
The mater faire is of to make
God graunt me in gree that she it take
For whom that it begonnen is
And that is she, that hath iwis
So mokell prise, and therto she
So worthy is beloued to be
That she wel ought of prise and right
Be cleped Rose of euery wight
That it was Mey me thought tho
It is fiue yere or more ago
That it was Mey, thus dremed me
In time of loue and iolite
That al thing ginneth waxen gay
For there is nether bulke nor hay
In Mey, that it nill shrouded bene
And it with newe leues wrene
These woddes che recoueren grene
That drie in winter ben to sene
And the erth wexeth proude withall
For swote dewes that on it fall
And the poore estate forgette
In whiche that winter had it sette
And than become the grounde so proude
That it wol haue a newe shroude
And maketh so queint his robe and fayre
That it had hewes an hundred payre
Of grasse and floures, inde and pers
And many hewes full diuers
That is the robe I mene iwis
Through whiche the ground to praisen is
The birdes that han left her songe
While thei han suffred colde ful stronge
In wethers grille, and derke to sight
Ben in Mey, for the sunne bright
So glad, that they shewe in singing
That in her hert is suche liking
That thei mote singen and ben light
Than dothe the nightingale her might
To maken noise, and singen blithe
Than is blisfull many a sithe
The chelaundre, and the popingay
Than yonge folke entenden aye
For to ben gaie and amorous
The time is than so sauourous
Harde is his herte that loueth nought
In Mey, whan al this mirth is wrought
Whan he may on these braunches here
The small birdes singen clere
Her blisfull swete songe pitous
And in this seson delitous
Whan loue affirmeth all thing
Me thought one night, in my sleping
Right in my bed, ful redily
That it was by the morowe erly
And vp I rose, and gan me clothe
Anon I wisshe mine hondes bothe
A siluer nedil forth I drowe
Out of an aguiler queint inowe
And gan this nedill threde anone
For out of toune me list to gone
The soune of briddes for to here
That on the buskes singen clere
That in the swete season that lese is
With a threde basting my sleuis
Alone I went in my playyng
The smale soules songe herkening

That paued hem ful many a paire
To sing on bowes blossomed faire
Iolife and gaie, full of gladnesse
Towarde a Riuer gan I me dresse
That I herde renne fast by
For fairer plaien none saugh I
Than plaien me by that riuere
For from an hill that stode there nere
Come doune the streme full stille and bold
Clere was the water, and as cold
As any welle is, sothe to saine
And soudele lasse it was than Saine
But it was straiter, wele away
And neuer saugh I er that daie
The water that so wele liked me
And wonder glad was I to se
That lusty place, and that riuere
And with that water that ran so clere
My face I wisshe, tho sawe I wele
The botome ipaued euerydele
With grauell, ful of stones shene
The medowes softe, sote, and grene
Beet right on the water side
Ful clere was than the morowe tide
And ful attempre out of drede
Tho gan I walken thorowe the Mede
Downwarde aye in my playing
The riuers side coosting.
And whan I had a while igone
I sawe a Garden right anone
Full long and brode, and euerydele
Enclosed was, and walled wele
With hie wales enbatailed
Portrayed without, and wel entailed
With many riche portreitures
And both yet images and peintures
Gan I beholde besely
And I wol tel you redely
Of thilke images the semblaunce
As ferre as I haue remembraunce.
Amidde sawe I Hate stonde
That for her wrathe and ire, and onde
Semed to be a minoresse
An angry wight a chideresse
And ful of gile, and fell corage
By semblaunt was that ilke image
And she was nothing wele araide
But like a wode woman afraide
Ypounced foule was her visage
And grinning for dispitous rage
Her nose snorted vp for tene
Ful hidous was she for to sene
Ful foule and rusty was she this
Her heed iwrithen was iwis
Ful grimly with a great towaile,
An image of an other entaile
Alike halfe was her fast by
Her name aboue her heed sawe I
And she was called Felony
Another image that Villany
Ycleped was, sawe I and fonde
Upon the wall on her right honde
Villany was like fondele
That other image, and trusteth wele
She semed a wicked creature
By countenaunce in portreiture
She semed be full dispitous
And eke ful proude, and outragious
Wel coude he paint I vndertake
That such an image coude make
Ful foule and chorlich semed she
And eke villeinous for to be
And litel coulde of norture
To worshippe any creature.
And nexte was painted Couetise
That eggeth folke in many a gise
To take and yeue right nought againe
And great treasours vp to laine
And that is she, that for vsure
Leneth to many a creature
The lasse for the more winning
So couetous is her brenning
And that is she for pennes feele
That techeth for to robbe and steele
These theues, and these smale harlotes
And that is routhe, for by her throtes
Full many one hongeth at the last
She maketh folke compasse and cast
To taken other folkes thing
Through robbery, or miscoueiting
And that is she that maketh trechours
And she maketh false pledours
That with her termes and her domes
Do maidens, children, and eke gromes
Her heritage forgo
Ful croked were her hondes two
For couetise is euer woode
To gripen other folkes goode
Couetise, for her winning
Ful lefe hath other mennes thing
Another image set saugh I
Nexte Couetise fast by
And she was cleped Auarice
Ful foule in painting was that vice
Ful sad and caitife was she eke
And also grene as any leke
So iuel hewed was her coloure
Her semed to haue liued in langoure
She was like thing for hunger deed
That lad her life onely by breed

Kneden

Kneden with eisel strong and egre
And therto she was lene and megre
And she was clad ful poorely
Al in an olde torne courtpy
As she were all with dogges torne
And bothe behinde and eke before
Clouted was she beggerly
A mantel honge her faste by
Upon a benche weyke and smal
A burnette cote honge there withal
Furred with no meniuere
But with a furre rough of heere
Of lambe skinnes heuy and blacke
It was full olde I vnder take
For Auarice to clothe her wele
Ne hasteth her neuer adele
For certainly it were her lothe
To wearen of that ilke clothe
And if it were forweared, she
Would haue full great nicete
Of clothing, er she bought her newe
Al were it bad of wol and hewe
This Auarice helde in her hande
A purse that honge by a bande
And that she hid and bonde so stronge
Men must abide wonder longe
Out of the purse er there come ought
For that ne cometh in her thought
It was not certaine her entent
That fro that purse a peny went
And by that image nigh inough
Was painted Enuy that euer lough
For neuer wel in her hert ferde
But if she either sawe or herde
Some great mischaunce, or great disese
Nothing may so much her plese
As mischiefe and misauenture
Or whan she seeth discomfiture
Upon any worthy man fall
Than liketh her well withall
She is full glad in her corage
If she se any great linage
Be brought to naught, in shamful wise
And if a man in honour rise
Or by his wit, or by his prowesse
Of that she hath great heuinesse
For trusteth well she goeth nie wood
Whan any chaunce hapeth good
Enuy is of suche cruelte
That faith ne trouth holdeth she
To frende ne felowe, badde or good
Ne she hath kinne none of her blood
That she nis ful her enemy
She nolde, I dare saine hardely
Her owne father fared wele
And sore abieth she euery dele
Her malice, and her male talent
For she is in so great turment
And hate suche, whan folke doth good
That nigh she melteth for pure wood
Her hert herueth and so breketh
That God the people wel a wreketh
Enuy iwis shall neuer let
Some blame vpon the folke to set
I trowe that if Enuy iwis
Knew the best man that is
On this side or beyonde the see
Yet somwhat lacken him would she
And if he were so hende and wise
That she ne might al abate his prise
Yet would she blame his worthinesse
Or by her wordes make it lesse
I sawe Enuy in that painting
Had a wonderful loking
For she ne loked but awrie
Or ouert wharte, all baggingly
And she had a foule visage
She might loke in no visage
Of man ne woman, forth right plaine
But shette her one eye for disdaine
So for Enuie brenned she
Whan she might any man se
That faire, or worthy were, or wise
Or els stode in folkes prise
Sorowe was painted nert Enuie
Upon that wal of masonrie
But wel was sene in her colour
That she had liued in langour
Her semed to haue the iaundice
Not halfe so pale was Auarice
Ne nothing like of leanesse
For sorowe, thought, and great distresse
That she had suffred day and night
Made he yelowe, and nothing bright
Ful sade, pale, and megre also
Was neuer weight yet halfe so wo
As that her semed for to be
Nor so fulfilled with yre, as she
I trow that no wight might her plese
Nor do that thing that might her ese
Nor she ne would her sorowe slake
Nor comforte none vnto her take
So depe was her wo begonne
And eke her hert in angre ronne
A sorowful thing well semed she
Nor she had nothing slowe be
For to cratchen all her face
And for to rent in many place
Her clothes, and for to teare her swire
As she that was fulfilled of ire

And all to tome laie eke her herre
About her shulders, here and there
As she that had it all to rent
For angre and for male talent
And eke I tell you certainly
How that she wept full tenderly
In worlde nis wight so hard of harte
That had seen her sorowes smarte
That nolde haue had of her pite
So wo begon a thing was she
She all to dasht her self for wo
And smote togider her hondes two
To sorowe was she full ententife
That wofull recheleſſe caitife
Her roughe little of playing
Or of clipping or kissing
For who so sorowfull is in harte
Him lust not to plaie ne starte
Nor for to dauncen, ne to sing
Ne maie his harte in temper bring
To make ioie on euen or morowe,
For ioie is contrary vnto sorowe.
Elde was painted after this
That shorter was a foote iwis
Than she was wont in her yonghede
Unneth her self she might fede
So feble and eke so old was she
That faded was all her beaute
Full falowe was waxen her colour
Her hedde for hore was white as flour
Iwis greate qualme ne were it none
Ne sinne, although her life were gone
All woren was her body vnwelde
And drie and dwined all for elde
A foule forwelked thing was she
That whilom round and soft had be
Her heeres shoken fast withall
As from her hedde thei would fall
Her face frounced and forpined
And bothe her hondes lorne forwined
So old she was, that she ne went
A foote, but it were by potent
The time that passeth night and daie
And restleſſe trauaileth aie
And stealeth from vs so priuely
That to vs semeth siker ly
That it in one poinct dwelleth euer
And certes it ne resteth neuer
But goeth so fast, and passeth aie
That there nis man that thinke maie
What time that now present is
Ilheth at these clerkes this
For men thinke it redily
Thre times been passed by
The time that maie not soiourne
But goth, and maie neuer retourne
As water that doune runneth aie
But neuer droppe retourne maie
There maie nothing as time endure
Metall, nor earthly creature
For all thing is frette and shall
The time eke that chaungeth all
And all doeth waxe, and forfret be
And all thing distroieth he
The time that eldeth our auncestours
And eldeth kinges and Emperours
And that vs all shall ouercomen
Er that death vs shall haue nommen
The time that hath all in welde
To elden folke had made her elde
So inly, that to my weting
She might helpe her self nothing
But tourned ayen vnto childhede
She had nothing her self to lede
Ne witte ne pithe in her hold
More than a child of two yere old
But natheleſſe I trowe that she
Was faire somtime, and freshe to se
Whan she was in her rightfull age
But she was past all that passage
And was a doted thing becomen
A furred cappe on had she nommen
Well had she clad her self and warme
For cold might els doen her harme
These old folke haue alwaie cold
Her kinde is soche, whan thei been old.
An other thing was doen there write
That semed like an Ipocrite
And is was cleped Pope Holie
That ilke is she, that priuelie
Ne spareth neuer a wicked deede
Whan men of her taken none heede
And maketh her outward precious
With pale visage and pitous
And semeth a simple creature
But there nis no misauenture
That she ne thinketh in her corage
Full like to her was thilke Image
That maked was like her semblaunce
She was full simple of countenaunce
And she was clothed and eke shod
As she were for the loue of God
Yolden to Religion
Soche semed her deuocion
A Psalter helde she fast in honde
And busily she gan to fonde
To make many a faint praiere
To God, and to his sainctes dere
Ne she was gaie, freshe, ne iolife
But semed to be full ententife

To good werkes, and to faire
And therto she had on an haire
Ne certes she was fatte nothing
But semed werie for fasting
Of colour pale and dede was she
From her the gates aie warned be
Of Paradise, that blissfull place
For soche folke maken leane her grace
As Christ saieth in his Euangile
To get hem prise in toune a while
And for a little glory beigne
Thei lesen God and eke his reigne.
And alderlast of euerichone
Was painted Pouertè alone
That not a peny had in hold
Although she her clothes sold
And though she should an honged be
For naked as a worme was she
And if the weather stormie were
For cold she should haue died there
She ne had on but a straite old sacke
And many a clout on it there stacke
This was her cote, and her mantele
No more was there neuer a dele
To clothe her with, I vndertake
Greate leaser had she to quake
And she was put, that I of talke
Ferre fro these other, vp in an halke
There lurked, and there coured she
For poore thing where so it be
As shamefast, and dispised aie
I cursed maie well be that daie
That poore man conceiued is
For God wote all to selde i wis
As any poore man well ifed
Or well araied or icled
Or well beloued, in soche wise
In honour, that he maie arise.
All these thinges well auised
As I haue you er this deuised
With gold and asure ouer all
Depainted were vpon the wall
Square was the wall, and high soudeale
Enclosed, and ibarred weale
In stede of hegge, was that gardin
Come neuer shepherde therein
Into that gardin, well wrought
Who so that me coud haue brought
By ladders, or els by degre
It would well haue liked me
For soche solace, soche ioie, and plete
I trowe that neuer man ne seie
As was in that place delicious
The gardin was not daungerous
To herborowe birdes many one
So riche a yere was neuer none
Of birdes song, and braunches grene
Therein were birdes mo I wene
Than been in all the realme of Fraunce
Full blissfull was the accordaunce
Of swete petous song thei made
For all this worlde it ought glade
And I my self so mery ferde
Whan I her blissfull songes herde
That for an hundred pounde would I
If that the passage openly
Had be vnto me free
That I nolde entren for to see
Thassemble, God kepe it fro care
Of birdes, whiche therein ware
That songen through her mery throtes
Daunces of loue, and mery notes.

Whan I thus heard foules sing
I fell fast in a waimenting
By whiche art, or by what engin
I might come into that gardin
But waie I couthe finde none
Into that gardin for to gone
Ne nought wist I if that there were
Either hole or place where
By whiche I might haue entre
Ne there was none to teache me
For I was all alone i wis
For wo and anguishe of this
Till at laste bethought I me
That by no waie ne might it be
That there nas ladder ne waie to pace
Or hole, into so faire a place
Tho gan I go a full greate paas
Enuiron, euen in compas
The closing of the square wall
Till that I founde a wicket small
So shette, that I ne might in gone
And other entre was there none.

Vpon this doore I gan to smite
That was fetis, and so lite
For other waie coud I not seke
Full long I shoke, and knocked eke
And stode full long all herkening
If that I heard any wight coming
Till that the doore of thilke entre
A maiden curteis opened me
Her heere was as yelowe of hewe
As any basen scoured newe
Her flesche tender as is a chike
With bent browes, smothe and slike
And by measure large were
The opening of her yen clere

Her nose of good proporcion
Her iyen graie, as is a faucon
With swete breath, and well fauoured
Her face white, and well coloured
With little mouthe and round to se
A cloue chinne eke had she
Her necke was of good fassion
In length and greatnesse by reason
Without bleine, scabbe, or roine
Fro Hierusalem vnto Burgoine
There nis a fairer necke iwis
To sele how smothe and soft it is
Her throte also white of hewe
As Snowe on braunce snowed newe
Of body full well wrought was she
Men neden not in no countre
A fairer bodie for to seke
And of fine Orfrais had she eke
A chapelet, so semely on
Ne neuer wered maide vpon
And faire aboue that chapelet
A rose garlande had she set
She had a gaie mirrour
And with a riche golde treasour
Her hedde was tressed queintly
Her sleues sewed setously
And for to hepe her hondes faire
Of gloues white she had a paire
And she had on a cote of Grene
Of cloth of Gaunt, withouten wene
Well semed by her aparaile
She was not wont to greate trauaile
For whan she kempt was seteously
And well araied and richely
Than had she doen all her iourne
For mery and well begon was she
She lad a luftie life in Maie
She had no thought, by night ne daie
Of nothing, but if it were onely
To graieth her well and vncouthly.

Whan that this doore had opened me
This Maie, semely for to se
I thonked her as I best might
And ashed her how that she hight
And what she was, I asked eke
And to me was nought vnmeke
Ne of her answere daungerous
But faire answerde, and saied thus
Lo sir, my name is Idelnesse
So clepe men me, more and lesse
Full mightie and full riche am I
And that of one thing namely
For I entende to nothing
But to my ioie, and my plaiyng
And for to kembe and tresse me
Iquainted am I and priue
With Mirthe, Lorde of this gardin
That fro the londe of Alexandrin
Made the trees hither be set
That in this gardin been iset
And whan the trees were woxen an hight
This wall, that stant here in thy sight
Did Mirthe enclosen all about
And these Images all without
He did hem bothe entaile and paint
That neither been iolife ne quaint
But thei been full of sorowe and wo
As thou hast seen a while ago.

And oft time him to solace
Sir Mirthe cometh into this place
And eke with him cometh his meine
That liuen in lust and iolite
And now is Mirthe therein, to here
The birdes how thei singen clere
The Mauis and the Nightingale
And other foly birdes smale
And thus he walketh to solace
Him and his folke, for swetter place
To plaien in, he maie not finde
Although he sought one in till Inde
The aither faireft folke to se
That in this worlde maie founde be
Hath Mirthe with him in his rout
That folowen him alwaies about
Whan Idelnesse had tolde all this
And I had harkened well iwis
Than saied I to dame Idelnesse
Now also wisely God me blesse
Sith Mirthe, that is so faire and fre
As in this yerde, with his menie
Fro thilke assemble, if I maie
Shall no man werne me to daie
That I this night ne mote it se
For well wene I there with him be
A faire and ioly companie
Fulfilled of all curtesie
And forth without wordes mo
In at the wicket went I tho
That Idelnesse had opened me
Into that gardin faire to se.

And whan I was in iwis
Mine harte was full glad of this
For well wende I full liberly
Haue been in Paradise yearthly
So faire it was, that trusteth well
It semed a place espirituell
For certes at my deuise

There is no place in Paradise
So good in for to dwell or be
As in that gardin thought me
For there was many a birde singing
Throughout the yerde all thringing
In many places were Nightingales
Alpes, Finches, and Wodwales
That in her swete song deliten
In thilke places as thei habiten
There might men se many flockes
Of Turtels and Lauerockes
Chalaundres sele sawe I there
That wery nigh forsongen were
And Thrustels, Terins, and Mauise
That songen for to winne hem prise
And eke to surmount in her song
That other birdes hem emong
By note made faire seruise
These birdes, that I you deuise
Thei song her song, as faire and wele
As angels doen espirituell
And trusteth me, whan I hem heard
Full lustie and well I feard
For neuer yet soche melodie
Was heard, of man that might die
Soche swete song was hem emong
That me thought it no birdes song
But it was wonder like to be
Song of Meremaidens of the see
That for her singing is so clere
Though we Meremaidens clepe hem here
In Englishe, as is our vsaunce
Men clepe hem Sereins in Fraunce.

Ententife weren for to sing
These birdes, that not vnkonning
Were of her craft, and a prentise
But of song subtill and wise
And certes, whan I heard her song
And sawe the grene place emong
In harte I wert so wonder gaie
That I was neuer erst, er that daie
So iolife, nor so well bigo
Ne mery in harte, as I was tho
And than wist I, and sawe full well
That idelnesse me serued well
That me put in soche iolite
Her frende well ought I for to be
Sithe she the dooze of that gardin
Had opened, and me let in.

From hens forthe, how that I wrought
I shall you tell, as me thought
First whereof Mirthe serued there
And eke what folke there with him were
Without fable I woll discriue
And that gardin eke as bliue
I woll you tellen after this
The faire fassion all iwis
That well wrought was for the nones
I maie not tell you all atones
But as I maie and can, I shall
By order tellen you it all.
Full faire seruice, and eke full swete
These birdes maden as thei sete
Laies of loue, full well souning
Thei songen in her iargoning
Some hie, and some eke lowe song
Upon the braunches grene isprong
The swetenesse of her melodie
Made all mine harte in reuelrie
And whan that I heard I trowe
These birdes singing on a rowe
Than might I not withholde me
That I ne went in for to se
Sir Mirthe, for my desiring
Was him to seen ouer all thing
His countenaunce and his manere
That sight was to me full dere.

Tho went I forthe on my right honde
Doune by a little pathe I fonde
Of Hintes full, and Fenell grene
As fast by without wene
Sir Mirthe I founde, and right anon
Unto sir Mirthe gan I gon
There as he was him to solace
And with him, in that lustie place
So faire folke and so freshe had he
That whan I sawe, I wondred me
Fro whens soche folke might come
So faire thei weren all and some
For thei weren like, as to my sight
To angels, that been fethered bright.
These folke, of whiche I tell you so
Upon a karole wenten tho
A Ladie karoled hem, that hight
Gladnesse, blisfull and light
Well could she sing and lustely
None halfe so well and semely
And cothe make in song soche refraining
It sate her wonder well to sing
Her voice full clere was and full swete
She was not rude ne vnmete
But couthe inough for soche doing
As longeth vnto karolling
For she was wont in euery place
To singen first, folke to solace
For singing moste she gaue her to
No crafte had she so lefe to doe.

THo mightest thou karolles seen
And folke daunce and merie been
And made many a faire tourning
Upon the grene grasse springing
There mightest thou se these Flutours
Minstrals and eke ioglours
That well to sing did her paine
Some song sonnges of Lorraine
For in Lorraine her notes be
Full sweter than in this countre
There was many a Timbestere
And sailours, that I dare well swere
Cothe her craft full parfitly
The Timbres up full subtelly
Thei cast, and hent full oft
Upon a finger faire and soft
That thei failed neuer mo
Full fetis damosels two
Right yong, and full of semelyhede
In kirtels, and none other wede
And faire tressed euery tresse
Had Mirthe doen for his noblesse
Amidde the carole for to daunce
But hereof lieth no remembraunce
How that thei daunsed queintly
That one would come all priuely
Ayen that other, and whan thei were
Togither almoste, thei threwe ifere
Her mouthes so, that through her plaie
It semed as thei kist alwaie
To dauncen well couthe thei the gise
What should I more to you deuise
Ne bode I neuer thens go
Whiles that I sawe hem daunce so
Upon the karoll wonder fast
I gan beholde, till at last
A Ladie gan me for to espie
And she was cleped Curtesie
The worshipfull, the debonaire
I praie to God euer fall her faire
Full Curtesly she called me
What doe ye there Beau sire (q she)
Come, and if it like you
To dauncen, daunseth with vs now
And I without taryng
Went into the karoling
I was abashed neuer a deale
But it to me liked right weale
That Curtesie me cleped so
And bade me on the daunce go
For if I had durst certain
I would haue karolled right fain
As man that was to daunce right blithe
Than gan I loken oft sithe
The shap, the bodies, and the cheres
The countenaunce and the maneres
Of all the folke that daunced there
And I shall tell what thei were.

Full faire was Mirthe, full long and high
A fairer man I neuer sigh
As rounde as aple was his face
Full roddie and white in euery place
Fetis he was and well beseie
With metely mouthe, and yen greie
His nose by measure wrought full right
Crispe was her heere, and eke full bright
His shulders of large brede
And smalishe in the girdelstede
He semed like a purtreiture
So noble he was of his stature
So faire, so iolie, and so fetise
With limmes wrought at poinct deuise
Deliuer, smerte, and of greate might
Ne sawe thou neuer man so light
Of berde vnneth had he nothing
For it was in the first spring
Full yong he was, and merie of thought
And in samette, with birdes wrought
And with golde beaten full fetously
His bodie was clad full richely
Wrought was his robe in straung egise
And all to slittered for queintise
In many a place, lowe and hie
And shode he was with greate maistrie
With shone decoped, and with lace
By durie, and by solace
His leefe a rosen chapelet
Had made, and on his hedde it set
And wete ye who was his lefe
Dame gladdesse there was him so lefe
That singeth so well with glad corage
That from she was twelue yere of age
She of her loue graunt him made
Sir Mirthe her by the finger hade
Daunsing, and she him also
Greate loue was a twixt hem two
Bothe were thei faire and bright of hewe
She semed like a rose newe
Of colours, and her flesche so tender
That with a Brere smale and tender
Men might it cleue, I dare well saie
Her forhedde frounceles all plaie
Bent were her browes two
Her iyen graie, and glad also
That laughden aie in her semblaunt
First or the mouthe by couenaunt
I wot not what of her nose I shall discriue
So faire hath no woman a liue
Her heere was yelowe, and clere shining

I wot no lady so liking.
Of Ozraies freshe, was her garlande
I whiche seen haue a thousande
Sawe neuer iwis no garlande yet
So well wrought of silke as it
And in an ouer gilt samite
Cladde she was, by greate delite
Of whiche her leefe a robe werde
The merier she in her harte ferde
And next her went, on her other side
The God of loue, that can deuide
Loue, and as him likethit be
But he can cherles daunten, he:
And many folkes pride fallen
And he can well these lordes thrallen
And ladies put at lowe degree
whan he maie hem to proude see.

This God of loue of his fascion
Was like no knaue, ne quistron
His beautie greatly was to prise
But of his robe to deuise
I drede encombred for to be
For not icladde in silke was he
But all in floures and flourettes
Ipainted all with amorettes
And with losenges and scochons
With birdes, Liberdes, and Lions
And other beastes wrought full weale
His garment was euery deale
Ipurtraied and iwrought with floures
By diuers medeling of coloures
Floures there were of many gise
Iset by compace in a sise
There lacked no floure to my dome
Ne not so moche as floure of Brome
Ne violet, ne che peruinke
Ne floure none, that men can on thinke
And many a rose lefe full long
was entermedled there emong
And also on his hedde was set
Of roses redde a chapelet
But Nightingales a full greate rout
That flien ouer his hedde about
The leaues felden as thei flien
And he was all with birdes wrien
With Popingaie, with Nightingale
With Chalaundre, and with wodewale
With finche, with larke, and with archangel
He semed as he were an angell
That doen were comen fro heauen clere
Loue had with him a bachelere
That he made alwaies with him be
Swete loking, cleped was he
This bacheler stode beholding
The daunce, and in his honde holding
Turke bowes two, full well deuised had he
That one of hem was of a tree
That beareth a fruict of sauour wicke
Full croked was that foule sticke
And knottie here and there also
And blacke as berie, or any slo.
That other bowe was of a plant
without wemme, I dare warant
Full euen and by proporcion
Trectes and long, of full good facion
And it was painted well and twhitten
And ouer all diapred and written
With ladies and with bacheleres
Full lightsome and glad of cheres
These bowes twoo held Swete loking
That semed like no gadling
And ten brode arowes helde he there
Of whiche fiue in his honde were
But thei were shauen well and dight
Nocked and fethered a right
And all thei were with golde begon
And strong poincted euerichon
And sharpe for to kerue wele
But Iron was there none ne stele
For all was golde, men might see
Out take the fethers and the tree.

The swiftest of these arowes fiue
Out of a bowe for to driue
And best fethered for to flie
And fairest eke was cleped Beautie
That other arowe that hurteth lesse
was cleped (as I trowe) Simplesse
The thirde cleped was Fraunchise
That fethered was in noble wise
With valour and with curtesie
The fowerth was cleped Companie
That heauie for to shoten is
But who so shoteth right iwis
Maie therwith doen greate harme and wo
The fift of these, and laste also
Faire Semblaunt men that arowe call
The least greuous of hem all
yet can it make a full greate wounde
But he maie hope his sores sounde
That hurte is with that arowes iwis
His wo the bette bestowed is
For he maie soner haue gladnesse
His langour ought be the lesse.

Fiue arowes were of other gise
That been full foule to deuise
For shaft and ende sothe for to tell
Were also blacke as fende in hell

The first of hem is called Pride
That other arowe nert him beside
It was cleped Vilanie
That arowe was, as with felonie
Enuenimed, and with spitous blame
The third of hem was cleped Shame
The fowerth Wanhope cleped is
The fifte the Newe thought i wis.

These arowes that I speake of here
Were all fiue on one maniere
And all were thei resemblable
To hem was well sitting and able
The foule croked bowe hidous
That knottie was, and all roinous
That bowe semed well to shete
The arrowes fiue, that been vnmete
And contrary to that other fiue
But though I tell not as bliue
Of her power, ne of her might
Herafter shall I tellen right
The sothe, and eke signifiaunce
As ferre as I haue remembraunce
All shall be saied I vndertake
Er of this booke an ende I make.

Now come I to my tale againe
But alderfirst, I will you saine
The fashion and the countenaunces
Of all the folke that on the daunce is
The God of Loue iolife and light
Ladde on his honde a Ladie bright
Of high prise, and of greate degre
This Ladie called was Beaute
And an arowe, of whiche I tolde
Full well thewed was she holde
Ne she was derke ne broune, but bright
And cleare as the Moone light
Again whom all the Sterres semen
But small candels, as we demen
Her flesche was tender as dewe of floure
Her cheare was simple as birde in boure
As white as Lilie or Rose in rise
Her face gentill and treatise
Fetis she was, and smale to se
No wintred browes had she
Ne popped her, for it neded nought
To winder her, or to paint her ought
Her tresses yelowe, and long straughten
Vnto her heles doune thei raughten
Her nose, her mouthe, and ye and cheke
Well wrought, and all the remnaunte eke
A full greate sauour and a swote
Me thought in mine harte rote
As helpe me God, whan I remember
Of the fashion of euery member
In worlde is none so faire a wight
For yong she was, and hewed bright
Sore pleasaunt, and fetis with all
Gent, and in her middle small
Beside Beaute yede richesse
And high Ladie of greate noblesse
And greate of price in euery place
But who so durst to her trespace
Or till her folke, in werke or dede
He were ful hardie out of drede
For bothe she helpe and hinder maie
And that is not of yesterdaie
That riche folke haue full greate might
To helpe, and eke to greue a wight
The best and greatest of valous
Didden Richesse full greate honour
And busie weren her to serue
For that thei would her loue deserue
Thei cleped her Ladie greate and small
This wide worlde her dredeth all
This worlde is all in her daungere
Her courte hath many a losengere
And many a traitour enuious
That been full busie and curious
For to dispreise, and to blame
That best deseruen loue and name
To forne the folke hem to begilen
These losengeours hem preise and smilen
And thus the worlde with worde anointen
But afterward thei prill and poincten
The folke, right to the bare bone
Behinde her backe whan thei been gone
And foule abaten folkes prise
Full many a worthie man and wise
Han hindred, and idoen to die
These losengeours with her flatterie
And maketh folke full straunge be
There as hem ought been priue
Well euill mote thei thriue and thee
And euill arriued mote thei bee
These losengeours full of enuie
No good man loueth her companie.

Richesse a robe of purple on had
Ne trowe not that I lie or mad
For in this worlde is none it liche
Ne by a thousande deale so riche
Ne none so faire, for it full weale
With Orfreis laied was euerydeale
And purtraide in the ribaninges
Of Dukes stories, and of Kinges
And with a bende of golde tasseled
And knoppes fine of golde amiled
About her necke of gentill entaile

was

was set the riche Cheuesaile
In whiche there was full greate plente
Of stones clere, and faire to se.
Richesse a girdle had vpon
The bokell of it was of ston
Of vertue greate, and mokell of might
For who so bare the stone so bright
Of venim durst him nothing doubt
While he the stone had him about
That stone was greatly for to loue
And till a riche mannes behoue
Worth all the golde in Rome, and frise
The Mourdant wrought in noble gise
Was of a stone full precious
That was so fine and vertuous
That whole a man it couth make
Of pallie, and of tothe ake
And yet the stone had soche a grace
That he was seker in euery place
All thilke daie not blinde to been
That fasting might that stone seen
The barres were of gold full fine
Upon a tissue of Satin
Full heuie, greate, and nothing light
In eueriche was a besaunt wight
Upon the tresses of richesses
Was set a circle of noblesse
Of brende golde, that full light shone
So faire trowe I was neuer none
But he were konning for the nones
That could deuise all the stones
That in that circle shewen clere
It is a wonder thing to here
For no man could preise or gesse
Of hem the value or richesse
Rubies there were, Saphirs, Ragounces
And Emeraudes, more than two vnces
But all before full subtilly
A fine Carboncle set sawe I
The stone so clere was and so bright
That all so sone as it was night
Men might seen to go for nede
A mile or two, in length and brede
Soche light sprang out of the stone
That richesse wonder bright shone
Bothe her hedde, and all her face
And ehe about her all the place.
Dame Richesse on her honde gan lede
A yong man full of semelyhede
That she best loued of any thing
His lust was moche in housholding
In clothing was he full fetise
And loued well to haue hors of prise
He wende to haue reproued be
Of theft or murder, if that he
Had in his stable an hackenaie
And therfore he desired aie
To been aqueinted with Richesse
For all his purpose, as I gesse
Was for to make greate dispence
Withouten warning or defence
And Richesse might it well sustain
And her dispences wele maintain
And him alwaie soche plentie sende
Of golde and siluer for to spende
Without lacking or daungere
As it were pourde in a garnere.

And after on the daunce went
Largesse, that set all her entent
For to been honourable and free
Of Alexanders kinne was she
Her moste ioie was iwis
Whan that she yaf, and saied: haue this
Not Auarice the foule caitise
Was halfe to gripe so ententife
As Largesse is, to yeue and spende
And God alwaie inowe her sende
So that the more she yaue awaie
The more iwis she had alwaie
Greate loos hath Largesse, and greate prise
For bothe wise folke and vnwise
Were wholy to her dandon brought
So well with yeftes hath she wrought
And if she had an enemie
I trowe that she couth craftely
Make him full sone her frende to be
So large of yeftes, and wise was she
Therfore she stode in loue and grace
Of riche and poore in euery place
A full greate foole is he iwis
That bothe riche and poore, and nigard is
A Lorde maie haue no maner vice
That greueth more than Auarice
For Nigarde neuer with strength of hande
Maie winne him greate lordship or lande
For frendes all to fewe hath he
To doen his will performed be
And who so woll haue frendes here
He maie not holde his treasour dere
For by ensample tell I this
Right as an Adamant iwis
Can drawen to him subtelly
The Iron, that is laied therby
So draweth folkes hartes iwis
Siluer and golde that yeuen is
Largesse had on a robe freshe
Of riche purpure Sarlinishe
Well formed was her face and clere
And opened had she her colere

For the right there had in present
Unto a Lady made present
Of a Gold broche, ful wel wrought
And certes it missate her nought
For through her smocke wrought with silke
The flesche was sene as white as milke
Largesse, that worthy was and wise
Held by the honde a knight of prise
Was sibbe to Arthour of Bretaigne
And that was he that bare the enseigne
Of worship, and the Gouskaucoun
And yet he is of suche renoun
That menne of him say faire thinges
Before Barons, Erles, and Kinges
This knight was comen al newly
Fro tourneying fast by
There had he done great chyualrie
Through his vertue and his maistrie
And for the loue of his lemman
He cast doune many a doughty man
And nert him daunced dame Fraunchise
Arraied in ful noble gise
She nas not broune ne dunne of hewe
But white as snowe ifallen newe
Her nose was wrought at point deuise
For it was gentill and tretise
With eien glad, and browes bent
Her heere doune to her heles went
And she was simple as douue on tree
Ful debonaire of hert was she
She durst neither say ne do
But that, that hir longeth to
And if a manne were in distresse
And for her loue in hernesse
Her hert would haue ful great pite
She was so amiable and free
For were a manne for her bestadde
She would ben right sore adradde
That she did ouer great outrage
But she him holpe his harme taswage
Her thought it all a vilanie
And she had on a surkeny
That not of hempe herdes was
So faire was none in all Arras
Lorde it was riddeled fetily
There nas not a point truely
That it nas in his right assise
Ful wel iclothed was Fraunchise
For there nis no clothe sitteth bette
On damosell, than doth robette
A woman wel more fetise is
In robette, than in cote iwis
The white robette riddeled faire
Betokeneth that full debonaire
And swete was she that it bere

By her daunced a Bachelere
I can not tellen you what he hight
But faire he was and of good hight
Al had he ben, I saie no more
The lordes sonne of Windesore.
And next that daunced Curtesy
That preised was of lowe and hie
For nether proude ne fole was she
She for to daunce called me
I praie God giue her good grace
For whan I come first into the place
She nas not nice, ne outrageous
But wise and ware, and vertuous
Of faire speche, and faire answere
Was neuer wight missaide of here
She bare no rancour to no wight
Clere broune she was, and therto bright
Of face and body auenaunt
I wotte no lady so plesaunt
She were worthy for to bene
An Empresse or crouned Quene.
And by her went a knight dauncing
That worthy was and wel speking
And ful wel coude he don honour
The knight was faire and stiffe in stour
And in armure a semely man
And wel beloued of his lemman.
Faire Idelnesse than saugh I
That alway was me fast by
Of her haue I without faile
Tolde you the shape and appareile
For (as I said) Lo, that was she
That did to me so great bounte
She the gate of that gardin
Undid, and let me passen in
And after daunced as I gesse
And she fulfilled of lustinesse
That nas not yet. xii. yere of age
With hert wilde, and thought volage
Nice she was, but she ne mente
None harme ne sleight in her entente
But onely luste and iolite
For yonge folke, wel weten ye
Haue litell thought, but on her play
Her lemman was beside alway
In suche a gise that he her kisse
At al times that him liste
That al the daunce might it se
They make no force of preuite
For who so spake of hem iuel or wele
Thei were ashamed neuer a dele
But men might sene hem kisse there
As it two yonge doues were
For yonge was thilke Bachelere
Of beaute wot I non his pere

In

And he was right of suche an age
As youth his leke, and suche corage
The lusty folke that daunced there
And also other that with hem were
That weren all of her meine
Ful hende folke, wise, and free
And folke of faire porte truely
There were al comenly
Whan I had sene the countenaunces
Of hem that ladden thus these daunces
Than had I will to go and se
The gardin that so liked me
And loken on these faire Laurelles
On Pine trees, Cedres, and Olmeres
The daunces than ended were
For many of hem that daunced there
Were with her loues went away
Under the trees to haue her play.

A Lorde thei liued lustely
A great foole were he sikerly
That nolde his thankes suche life lede
For this dare I saine out of drede
That who so might so well fare
For better life durst him not care
For there nis so good paradise
As to haue a loue at his deuise
Out of that place went I tho
And in that gardin gan I go
Plaiyng a long ful merely
The God of Loue full hastely
Unto him Swete Lokyng clept
No lenger would he that she kept
His bowe of Gold, that shone so bright
He had him bent anon right
And he full soone set an ende
And at a braide he gan it bende
And toke him of his arowes fiue
Ful sharpe and redy for to driue.
Now God that sitteth in maiestie
So deedly woundes he hepeme
If so be that he had me shete
For if I with his arowe mete
It had me greued sore iwis
But I that nothing wist of this
Went vp and doune, ful many a waie
And he me folowed fast alwaie
But no where would I rest me
Til I had in all the gardin be.

The Gardin was by mesuring
Right euen and square in compassing
As longe was as it was large
Of fruite had euery tree his charge
But it were any hidous tree
Of whiche there were two or thre
There were, and that wote I full wele
Of Pomgarnettes a full great dele
That is a frute ful welle to like
Namely to folke whan thei ben sike
And trees there were, great foison
That baren nuttes in her season
Suche as menne nutemigges call
That swote of sauour ben withall
And Almandres great plente
Figges, and many a Date tre
There weren, if menne had nede
Throug the Gardin, in length and brede
There was eke wexing many a spice
As Clowe, Gilofre, and Licorice
Gingere, and Grein de Paris
Canell, and Sete wale of prys
And many a spice delitable
To eeten whan menne rise fro table
And many homely trees there were
That Peches, Coines, and Apples bere
Medlers, Plommes, Peeres, Chesteinis
Cherise, of whiche many one saine is
Notes, Aleis, and Bolas
That for to sene it was solas
With many high Laurer, and Pine
Was renged clene all that gardine
With Cipres, and with Oliuers
Of whiche that nigh no plenty here is
There were Elmes great and strong
Maples, Asshe, Oke, Aspes, Planes long
Fine Ewe, Popler, and Lindes faire
And other trees full many a paire
What should I tel you more of it?
There were so many trees yet
That I should al encombred be
Er I had rekened euery tree
These trees were set that I deuise
One from an other in assise
Fiue fadome or sixe, I trowe so
But they were hie and great also
And for to kepe out wel the Sunne
The croppes were so thicke ironne
And euery braunce in other knitte
And ful of grene leues sitte
That Sunne might there none discende
Lest the tender grasses shende
There might men Does and Roes ise
And of squirels ful great plente
From bow to bow alwaie leping
Connis there were also plaiyng
That comen out of her clapers
Of sondry colours and maners
And maden many a tourneiyng
Upon the freshe grasse springing

In places sawe I welles there
In whiche there no frogges were
And faire in shadowe was euery wel
But I ne can the nombre tel
Of stremis smal that by deuise
Wirth had done come through condise
Of whiche the water in renning
Gan make a noise ful liking
About the brinkes of these welles
And by the stremes ouer al elles
Sprange vp the grasse, as thicke iset
And soft as any veluet
On which men might his lemman ley
As on a fetherbed to pley
For the earth was full softe and swete
Through moisture of the wel wete
Sprong vp the sote grene gras
As faire, as thicke, as mister was
But moche amended it the place
That therth was of suche a grace
That it of floures hath plente
That both in somer and winter be
There sprange the violet al newe
And freshe perwinke riche of hewe
And floures yelowe, white, and rede
Suche plente grewe there neuer in mede
Ful gaie was al the grounde and queint
And poudred, as men had it pent
With many a freshe and sondry floure
That casten vp ful good sauour
I wol not longe holde you in fable
Of al this gardin delectable
I mote my tonge stinten nede
For I ne maie withouten drede
Naught tellen you the beaute all
Ne halfe the bountie there withall
I went on right honde and on lefte
About the place, it was not lefte
Till I had al the garden bene
In the efters that men might sene
And thus while I went in my playe
The God of loue me folowed aye
Right as an Hunter can abide
The beest, till he seeth his tide
To shoten at goodnesse to the deere
Whan that him nedeth go no nere
And so befil, I rested me
Besides a wel vnder a tree
Whiche tree in Fraunce men cal a Pine
But sithe the time of king Pepine
Ne grewe there tree in mannes sight
So faire, ne so wel wore in hight
In al that yarde so high was none
And springing in a marble stone
Had nature set, the sothe to tell
Vnder that Pine tree a well
And on the border al without
Was writen in the stone about
Letters smal, that saiden thus
Here starfe the faire Narcisus.
Narcisus was a bachelere
That loue had caught in his daungere
And in his nette gan him so straine
And did him so to wepe and plaine
That nede him must his life forgo
For a faire lady that hight Echo
Him loued ouer any creature
And gan for him suche paine endure
That on a time she him tolde
That if he her louen nolde
That her behoued nedes die
There laie none other remedie
But natheless for his beaute
So feirs and daungerous was he
That he nolde graunten her asking
For weping, ne for faire praying
And whan she herde him werne her so
She had in hert so great wo
And toke it in so great dispite
That she without more respite
Was deed anon: but ere she deide
Ful pitously to God she preide
That proude herted Narcisus
That was in loue so daungerous
Might on a day ben hampered so
For loue, and ben so hote for wo
That neuer he might to ioie attaine
Than should he fele in euery vaine
What sorowe trewe louers maken
That ben so vilainously forsaken.

This prater was but resonable
Therfore God helde it ferme and stable
For Narcisus shortly to tell
By auenture came to that well
To rest him in the shadowing
A day, whan he come from hunting
This Narcisus had suffred paines
For renning al daie in the plaines
And was for thurst in great distresse
Of herte, and of his werinesse
That had his breth almost benomen
Whan he was to that wel icomen
That shadowed was with braunches grene
He thought of thilke water shene
To drinke, and freshe him wele withall
And doune on knees he gan to fall
And forth his neche and heed outstraught
To drinke of that well a draught
And in the water anon was sene

His

His nose, his mouthe, his eyen shene
And he therof was all abashed
His owne shadowe had him betrashed
For wel wende he the forme se
Of a childe of great beaute
Well couth loue him wreke tho
Of daunger and of pride also
That Narcisus somtime him bere
He quite him well his guerdon there
For he mused so in the well
That shortely the sothe to tell
He loued his owne shadowe so
That at last he starfe for wo
For whan he sawe that he his will
Might in no maner way fulfill
And that he was so fast caught
That he him couthe comfort naught
He lost his witte, right in that place
And deide within a litell space
And thus his warison he toke
For the lady that he forsoke
Ladies I praie ensample taketh
Ye that aienst your loue mistaketh
For if her death be you to wite
God can ful wel your while quite.

Whan that this letter, of whiche I tell
Had taught me that it was the well
Of Narcisus in his beaute
I gan anon withdrawe me
Whan it fel in my remembraunce
That him betide suche mischaunce
But at the laste than thought I
That scathelesse, ful liberly
I might vnto the welle go
Wherof shull I abashen so
Unto the welle than went I me
And doune I louted for to se
The clere water in the stone
And eke the grauel, whiche that shone
Doune in the botome, as siluer fine
For of the welle, this is the fine
In world is none so clere of hewe
The water is euer fresh and newe
That welmeth vp, with wawes bright
The mountenaunce of two finger hight
About it is grasse springing
For moiste so thicke and well liking
That it ne may in winter die
No more than may the see be drie.

Doune at the botome set sawe I
Two cristall stones craftely
In thilke freshe and faire well
But o thinge sothly dare I tell
That ye wol holde a great meruaile
Whan it is tolde, withouten faile
For whan the sunne clere in sight
Cast in that welle his bemes bright
And that the heete discended is
Than taketh the Cristall stone twis
Againe the sunne an hundred hewes
Blewe, yelow, and reed that fresh and new is
Yet hath the meruailous Cristall
Suche strength, that the place ouer all
Both foule and tree, and leues grene
And all the yerde in it is sene
And for to don you to vnderstande
To make ensample wol I fonde
Right as a mirrour openly
Sheweth al thing that stondeth thereby
As well the colour, as the figure
Withouten any couerture
Right so the Cristall stone shining
Withouten any disceiuing
The entrees of the yerde accuseth
To him that in the water museth
For euer in whiche halfe that ye be
Ye may wel halfe the Gardine se
And if he turne, he may right wele
Sene the remenaunt euery dele
For there is none so litel thing
So hid ne closed with shitting
That it ne is sene, as though it were
Painted in the Cristall there
This is the mirrour perillus
In whiche the proude Narcisus
Sey al his faire face bright
That made him sith to lie vpright
For who so lobe in that mirrour
There may nothing ben his socour
That he ne shal there se somthing
That shal him lede into laughing
Ful many a worthy man hath it
Yblent, for folke of greatest wit
Ben soone caught here and waited
Withouten respite ben thei baited
Here cometh to folke of newe rage
Here chaungeth many wight corage
Here lithe no rede ne witte therto
For Venus sonne, dan Cupido
Hath sowen there of loue the sede
That helpe ne lithe there none, ne rede
So cercleth it the welle about
His ginnes hath he set without
Right for to catche in his panters
These Damosels and Bachelers
Loue wil none other birde catche
Though he set either nette or latche
And for the sede that here was sowen

This welle is cleped, as well is knowen
The welle of Loue, of very right
Of whiche there hath ful many wight
Spoken in bokes diuersely
But thei shul neuer so verily
Discripcion of the welle here
Ne eke the sothe of this matere
As ye shul, whan I haue vndo
The crafte that her belongeth to.

ALway me liked for to dwell
To sene the christall in the well
That shewed me ful openly
A thousande thinges fast by
But I may saie in sory houre
Stode I to loken or to powre
For sithen I sore sighed
That Mirrour hath me now entriked
But had I first knowen in my wit
The vertue and strengthes of it
I nolde not haue mused there
Me had bette ben els where
For in the snare I fell anone
That had bitresshed many one
In thilke Mirrour sawe I tho
Among a thousande thinges mo
A roser charged ful of rosis
That with an hedge aboute enclosis
Tho had I suche lust and enuie
That for Paris ne for Pauie
Nolde I haue left to gone and se
There greatest heape of roses be
Whan I was with this rage hente
That caught hath many a man and shente
Towarde the Roser gan I go
And whan I was not ferre there fro
The sauour of the roses swote
Me smote right to the hert rote
As I had all enbaumed me
And if I ne had endouted me
To haue ben hated or assailed
My thankes wol I not haue failed
To pull a rose of al that route
To bere in mine honde aboute
And smellen to it where I went
But euer I dredde me to repent
And leste it greued or forthought
The lorde that thilke gardin wrought
Of roses there were great wone
So faire ware neuer in Rone
Of knoppes close, some sawe I there
And some wel better woxen were
And some there ben of other moison
That drowe nigh to her season
And spedde hem faste for to spredde
I loue wel suche roses redde
For brode roses, and open also
Ben passed in a daie or two
But knoppes will freshe be
Two daies at leest, or els thre
The knoppes greatly liked me
For fairer maie there no man se
Who so might haue one of all
It ought him ben ful lefe withall
Might I garlonde of hem getten
For no richesse I wolde it letten
Amonges the knoppes I chese one
So faire, that of the remenaunt none
Ne preise I halfe so wel as it
Whan I auise in my wit
For it so well was enlumined
With colour reed, as well fined
As nature couth it make faire
And it hath leaues wel foure paire
That kind hath set through his knowing
Aboute the redde roses springing
The stalke was as rishe right
And theron stode the knoppe vpright
That it ne bowed vpon no side
The swote smell sprong so wide
That it died al the place aboute
Whan I had smelled the sauour swote
No will had I fro thence yet go
But somdele nere it went I tho
To take it, but mine honde for drede
Ne durst I to the Rose bede
For thisteles sharpe of many maners
Netles, thornes, and hoked briers
For muche they distourbled me
For sore I dradde to harmed be.

THe God of Loue, with bowe bent
That al daie set had his talent
To pursue and to spien me
Was stonding by a figge tree
And whan he sawe how that I
Had chosen so ententifely
The bothum more vnto my pay
Than any other that I say
He toke an arowe, ful sharpely whette
And in his bowe when it was sette
He streight vp to his eere drough
The strong bowe, that was so tough
And shotte at me so wonder smerte
That through mine eye vnto mine herte
The takel smote, and depe it wente
And therwith al suche colde me hente
That vnder clothes warme and softe
Sithen that day I haue chiuered ofte
Whan I was hurte thus in stounde

I fell doune plat vnto the grounde
Mine harte failed, and fainted aie
And long time in swoune I laie
But whan I came out of swouning
And had witte, and my feling
I was all mate, and wende full weale
Of blood, haue lorne a full greate
But certes the arowe that in me stoode
Of me ne drewe no droppe of blood
For why, I founde my woundes all drie
Than tohe I with mine hondes tweie
The arowe, and full fast it out plight
And in the pulling sore I sight
So at the last the shaft of tre
I drough out, with the fethers thre
But yet the hoked hedde iwis
The whiche beaute called is
Gan so depe in mine harte pace
That I it might not arace
But in mine harte still it stood
All bledde I not a droppe of blood
I was bothe anguishous and trouble
For the perill that I sawe double
I nist what to saie or doe
Ne get a leache my woundes to
For neither through grasse ne rote
Ne had I helpe of hope ne bote
But to the bothum euer mo
Mine harte drewe, for all my wo
My thought was in none other thing
For had it been in my keping
It would haue brought my life again
For certes euenly, I dare well sain
The sight onely, and the sauour
Aiegged moche of my langour
Than gan I for to drawe me
Toward the bothum faire to se
And Loue had gette him in his throwe
An other arowe into his bowe
And for to shote gan him dresse
The arowes name was Simplesse
And whan that Loue gan nigh me nere
He drowe it vp withouten were
And shote at me withall his might
So that this arowe anone right
Throughout eigh as it was founde
Into mine harte hath made a wounde
Than I anone did all my craft
For to drawen out the shaft
And therewithall I sighed eft
But in mine hart the hedde was left
Whiche aie encreased my desire
Unto the bothum drowe I nere
And euermo that me was wo
The more desire had I to go
Unto the Roser, where that grewe
The freshe bothum, so bright of hewe
Better me were to haue letten be
But it behoued nede me
To doen right as mine harte badde
For euer the body must be ladde
After the harte, in whele and wo
Of force togither thei must go
But neuer this archer would fine
To shote at me with all his pine
And for to make me to him mete
The thirde arowe he gan to shete
Whan best his time he might espie
The whiche was named curtesie
Into mine harte he did auale
I sowoune I fell, bothe dedde and pale
Long time I laie, and stired nought
Till I abraied out of my thought
And faste than I auised me
To drawe out the shaft of tre
But euer the hedde was left behinde
For ought I couthe pull or winde
So sore it sticked whan I was hit
That by no crafte I might it flit
But anguishous and full of thought
I felt soche wo, my wounde aie wrought
That somoned me alwaie to go
Toward the Rose, that pleased me so
But I ne durst in no manere
Bicause the archer was so nere
For euermore gladly as I rede
Brent child of fire hath moche drede
And certes yet for all my pein
Though that I sigh, yet arowes rein
And ground quareles, sharpe of stele
Ne for no pain that I might fele
Yet might I not my self with hold
The faire Roser to behold
For Loue me yaue soche hardiment
For to fulfill his commaundement
Upon my feete I rose vp than
Feble, as a forwounded man
And forthe to gon might I set
And for the Archer nolde I let
Toward the Roser fast I drowe
But thornes sharpe, mo than inowe
There were, and also thistels thicke
And brieres brimme for to pricke
That I ne might get grace
The rough thornes for to pace
To seen the Roses freshe of hewe
I must abide, though it me rewe
The hedge about so thicke was
That closed the Roses in compas
But o thing liked me right wele

I was so nigh, I might fele
Of the bothum the swote odour
And also se the freshe coloure
And that right greatly liked me
That I so nere might it se
Soche ioie anon thereof had I
That I forgate my malady
To seen I had soche delite
Of sorowe and anger I was all quite
And of my woundes that I had thore
For nothing liken me night more
Than dwellen by the Roser aie
And thens neuer to passe awaie
But whan a while I had be thare
The God of loue, whiche all to share
Mine harte with his arowes kene
Casteth him to yeue me woundes grene
He shote at me full hastely
An arowe named Companie
The whiche takell is full able
To make these Ladies merciable
Than I anon gan chaungen hewe
For greuaunce of my wounde newe
That I again fell in swouning
And sighed sore in complaining
Sore I complained that my sore
On me gan greuen more and more
I had none hope of Allegiaunce
So nigh I drowe to disperaunce
I rought of death, ne of life
Whether that loue would me drife
If me a martir would he make
I might his power not forsake
And while for anger thus I woke
The God of Loue an arowe toke
Full sharpe it was and pugnaunt
And it was called Faire semblaunt
The whiche in wise would consent
Th at any louer him repent
To serue his ioue, with harte and all
For any perill that maie befall
But though this arowe was kene grounde
As any rasour that is founde
To cutte and kerue at the poinct
The God of Loue it had anoint
With a precious ointment
Some dele to yeue alegement
upon the woundes that he hade
Through the body in my harte made
To helpe her sores, and to cure
And that thei maie the bette indure
But yet this arowe, without more
Made in mine harte a large sore
That in full greate pain I abode
But aie the ointment went abrode
Throughout my woundes large and wide
It spredе about in euery side
Through whose vertue, and whose might
Mine harte ioifull was and light
I had been dedde and all to shent
But for the precious ointment
The shaft I drowe out of the arowe
Roking for wo right wonder narowe
But the hedde, whiche made me smarte
Left behinde in mine harte
with other sower, I dare well saie
That neuer woll be take awaie
But the ointment halpe me wele
And yet soche sorowe did I fele
That all daie I chaunged hewe
Of my woundes freshe and newe
As men might se in my visage
The arowes were so full of rage
So variaunt of diuersite
That men in eueriche might se
But greate anoie, and eke swetnesse
And ioie meint with bitternesse
Now were thei easie, now were thei wood
In hem I felt bothe harme and good
Now sore without alleggement
Now softing with ointment
It softened here, and pricked there
Thus ease and anger togither were.

The God of Loue deliuerly
Come lepande to me hastely
And saied to me in greate iape
Yelde thee, for thou maie not escape
Maie no defence auaile thee here
Therefore I rede make no daungere
If thou wolt yelde thee hastely
Thou shalt rather haue mercie
He is a foole in sikernesse
That with daunger or stoutnesse
Rebelleth, there that he should please
In soche folie is little ease
Be meke, where thou must nedes bowe
To striue ayen is not thy prowe
Come at ones, and haue idoe
For I woll that it be so
Than yelde thee here debonairly
And I answered full humbly
Gladly sir, at your bidding
I woll me yelde in all thing
To your seruice I woll me take
For God defende that I should make
Ayen your bidding resistence
I woll not doen so greate offence
For if I did, it were no skill
Ye maie doe with me what ye will

Saue or spill, and also so
Fro you in no wise may I go
My life, my death, is in your honde
I maie not lasse out of your bonde
Plaine at your liste I yelde me
Hoping in hert, that somtime ye
Comforte and ese shul me sende
Or els shortly, this is the ende
Withouten health, I mote aie dure
But if ye take me to your cure
Comforte or helth, how should I haue
Sithe ye me hurte, but ye me saue
The helth of Loue mote be founde
Where as thei token first her wounde
And if ye liste of me to make
Your prisoner, I woll it take
Of herte and will fully at gre
Holy and plaine I yelde me
Without feining or feintise
To be gouerned by your empryse
Of you I here so muche pryse
I wol ben hole at your deuise
For to fulfill your liking
And repent for nothiug
Hoping to haue yet in some tide
Mercy, of that I abide
And with that couenaunt yelde I me
Anon doune kneling vpon my kne
Profering for to kisse his fete
But for nothing he would me lete.

And said, I loue the both and preise
Sens that thine answere doth me ese
For thou answered so curtesly
For nowe I wote well vtterly
That thou art gentle by thy speche
For though a man ferre would seche
Ye should not finden in certaine
No suche answere of no vilaine
For suche a worde ne might nought
Issue out of a vilaines thought
Thou shalt not lesen of thy speche
For thy helping woll I eche
And eke encresen that I maie
But first I woll that thou obaie
Fully for thine auauntage
Anone to do me here homage
And sithe kisse thou shalt my mouthe
Whiche to no vilaine was neuer couthe
For to aproche it, ne for to touche
For saufe of cherles I ne bouche
That thei shal neuer neigh it nere
For curteis, and of faire manere
Wel taught, and ful of gentelnesse
Ye must ben, that shall me kisse
And also of ful highe fraunchise
That shal atteine to that empryse
And first of o thing warne I thee
That paine and great aduersite
Ye mote endure, and eke trauaile
That shal me serue, without faile
But there against thee to comforte
And with thy seruice to disporte
Thou maist ful glad and ioyfull be
So good a maister to haue as me
And lord of so high renoun
I beare of loue the Gonfenoun
Of Curtesie the banere
For I am of selfe the manere
Gentill, curteis, meke, and fre
That who euer ententife be
Me to honour, doute, and serue
And also that he him obserue
For trespace and fro villanie
And him gouerne in curtesie
With will and entencion
For when he first in my prison
Is caught, than must he vtterly
Fro thence forthy ful besily
Cast him gentill for to be
Yf he desire helpe of me
Anone without more delaie
Withouten daunger or affraie
I become his man anone
And gaue him thankes many a one
And kneled doune with hondes ioint
And made it in my porte full queint
The ioye went to my herte rote
When I had kissed his mouth so swote
I had suche mirth and such liking
It cured me of languishing
He asked of me than hostages
I haue he saide taken fele homages
Of one and other, where I haue bene
Disseined ofte, withouten wene
These felons ful of falsite
Haue many sithes begiled me
And through her falsheed her lust achiued
Wherof I repent, and am agreued
And I hem gette in my daungere
Her falsheed shul thei bie full dere
But for I loue thee, I saie the plaine
I woll of thee be more certaine
For the lore I woll nowe binde
That thou away ne shalt not winde
For to denien thy couenaunt
Or done that is not auenaunt
That thou were false, it were great ruth
Sithe thou semest so ful of truth
Sir, if thee liste to vnderstande

I merueile thee asking this demaunde
For why or wherefore would ye
Hostages or borowes aske of me
Or any other siketnesse
Sithe ye wote in sothfastnesse
That ye me haue surprised so
And hole mine harte taken me fro
That it woll doe for me nothing
But if it be at your bidding
Mine hart is yours, and mine right nought
As it behoueth, in deede and thought
Redy in all to worche your will
Whether so tourne to good or ill
So sore it lusteth you to please
No man therof maie you disease
ye haue theron set soche iustice
That it is werried in many wise
And if ye doubt it nolde obaie
Ye maie therof doe make a haie
And hold it with you for hostage
Now certes this none outrage
(q Loue) and fully accorde
For of the body he is full Lorde
That hath the harte in his treasore
Outrage it were to asken more.

Than of his aumener he drough
A little keie fetise inough
Whiche was of gold polished clere
And saied to me, with this keie here
Thine harte to me now woll I shet
For all my ioifull loke and knet
I binde vnder this little keie
That no wight maie cary awaie
This keie is full of greate poste
With whiche anone he touched me
Under the side full softely
That he mine harte sodainly
Without any bad speered
That yet right nought it hath me deered
Whan he had doen his will all out
And I had put him out of dout
Sir I saied: I haue right greate will
Your lust and pleasure to fulfill
Loke ye my seruice take at gree
By thilke faith ye owe to me
I saie nought for recreaundise
For I nought doubt or your seruice
But the seruaunt trauaileth in vain
That for to seruen doeth his pain
Unto that lorde, whiche in no wise
Conne him no thanke for his seruice.

I Oue saied, dismaie thee nought
Sithe thou for succour hast me sought
In thanke thy seruice woll take
And high of degree I woll thee make
If wickednesse ne hinder thee
But (as I hope) it shall nought be
To worship no wight by auenture
Maie come, but he pain endure
Abide and suffre thy distresse
That hurteth now, it shall be lesse
I wote my self what maie thee saue
What medicine thou wouldest haue
And if thy truth to me thou kepe
I shall vnto thine helping eke
To cure thy woundes and make hem clene
Where so thei be old or grene
Thou shalt be holpen at wordes fewe
For certainly thou shalt well shewe
Where that thou seruest with good will
For to accomplishen and fulfill
My commaundementes daie and nigh
Whiche I to louers yeue of right.

Ay sir, for Goddes loue (saied I)
Er ye passe hens ententifely
Your commaundementes to me ye saie
And I shall kepe hem if I maie
For hem to kepen is all my thought
And if so be I wote hem nought
Than maie I vnwittingly
Wherfore I praie you entierly
With all mine harte, me to lere
That I trespace in no manere
The God of loue than charged me
Anon, as ye shall here and se
Worde by worde, by right empryse
So as the Romaunt shall deuise
The maister leseth his time to lere
Whan the disciple woll not here
It is but vain on him to swinke
That on his learning woll not thinke
Who so lust loue, let him entende
For now the Romance beginneth to amende
Now is good to heare in saie
If any be that can it saie
And poinct it as the reason is
Set for other gate i wis
It shall nat well in all thing
Be brought to good vnderstanding
For a reader that poincteth ill
A good sentence maie oft spill
The boke is good at the ending
Made of newe and lustie thing
For who so woll the ending here
The craft of loue he shall now lere
If that he woll so long abide
Till I this Romance maie vnhide

And bndoe the significaunce
Of this dreame into Romaunce
The sothfastnesse that now is hid
Without couerture shall be kid
Whan I vndoen haue this dreaming
Wherein no worde is of leasing.

VIllanie at the beginning
I woll saie loue ouer all thing
Thou leaue, if thou wolt be
False, and trespace ayenst me
I curse and blame generally
All hem that louen villanie
For villanie maketh villaine
And by his deedes a chorle is seine
These villains arne without pite
Frendship, loue, and all bounte
I will receiue vnto my seruice
Hem that been vilains of empryse
But vnderstonde in thine entent
That this is not mine entendiment
To clepe no wight in no ages
Onely gentell for his linages
But who so is vertuous
And in his port not outrageous
Whan sothe one thou seest thee before
Though he be not gentill borne
Thou maiest well seine this is in soth
That he is gentill, bicause he doth
As longeth to a gentil man
Of hem none other deme I can
For certainly withouten dreede
A chorle is demed by his deede
Of hie or lowe, as ye maie se
Or of what kinred that he be
Ne saie nought for none euill will
Thing that is to holden still
It is no worship to missaie
Thou maiest ensample take of Kaie
That was somtime for missaying
Hated bothe of old and yong
As ferre as Gawein the worthie
Was praised for his curtesie
Kaie was hated, for he was fell
Of worde dispitous and cruell
Wherefore be wise and aqueintable
Goodlie of worde, and reasonable
Bothe to lesse and eke to mare
And whan thou comest there men are
Loke that thou haue in custome aie
First to salue hem if thou maie
And if it fall that of hem somme
Salue the first, be not domme
But quite him curtesly anon
Without abiding, er thei gon

For nothing eke thy tong applie
To speake wordes of ribaudie
To vilaine speche, in no degre
Late neuer thy lippe vnbounden be
For I nought holde him in good faith
Curteis that foule wordes saith
And al women serue and preise
And to thy power her honour reise
And if that any missayere
Dispise women, that thou maist here
Blame him, and bidde him holde him still
And sette thy might, and al thy will
Women and ladies for to plese
And to do thing that may hem ese
That thei euer speke good of thee
For so thou maist best praised be
Loke fro pride thou kepe the wele
For thou maist both perceiue and fele
That pride is both foly and sinne
And he that pride hath him within
Ne may his hert in no wise
Meken ne souplen to seruice
For pride is founde in euery parte
Contrarie vnto Loues arte
And he that loueth truely
Should him conteine iolily
Without pride in sondry wise
And him disguisen in queintice
For queinte aray, without drede
Is nothing proude, who taketh hede
For freshe aray, as men may se
Without pride may ofte be
Maintaine thy selfe after thy rent
Of robe and eke of garment
For many sithe faire clothing
A man amendeth in muche thing
And loke alway that thei be shape
What garment that thou shalt make
Of him that can best do
With al that parteineth therto
Pointes and sleues be wel sittande
Right and streight on the hande
Of shone and bootes, newe and faire
Loke at the lest thou haue a paire
And that thei sitte so fetously
That these rude may vtterly
Merualle, sith that thei sitte so plaine
How thei come an or of againe
Weare streight gloues with aumere
Of silke, and alway with good chere
Thou yeue, if thou haue richesse
And if thou haue nought spende the lesse
Alway be mery, if thou maie
But waste not thy good alwaie
Haue hatte of floures freshe as May

Chapelet of Roses of Whitsondaie
For soche araie ne costneth but lite
Thine hondes washe, thy tethe make white
And let no filthe vpon thee be
Thy nailes blacke, if thou maiest se
Voide it awaie deliuerly
And kembe thine hedde right iolily
Farce not thy visage in no wise
For that of loue is nat thempryse
For loue doeth haten, as I finde
A beautie that cometh nat of kinde
Alwaie in harte I rede thee
Glad and mery for to be
And be as ioifull as thou can
Loue hath no ioie of sorowfull man
That euill is full of curtesie
That knoweth in his maladie
For euer of loue the sickenesse
Is meint with swete and bitternesse
The sore of loue is meruailous
For now the louer is ioious
Now can he plain, now can he grone
Now can he singen, now maken mone
To daie he plaineth for heuinesse
To morowe he plaineth for iolinesse
The life of loue is full contrarie
Whiche stoundemeale can oft varie
But if thou canst mirthes make
That men in gre woll gladly take
Doe it goodly, I commaunde thee
For men should where so euer thei be
Doe thing that hem sitting is
For therof cometh good loos and pris
Wherof that thou be vertuous
Ne be nat straunge ne daungerous
For if that thou good rider be
Pricke gladly that men maie se
In armes also if thou conne
Pursue till thou a name hast wonne
And if thy voice be faire and clere
Thou shalt maken no greate daunger
Whan to sing thei goodly praie
It is thy worship for to obaie
Also to you it longeth aie
To Harpe and Giterne, daunce and plaie
For if he can well foote and daunce
It maie him greatly doe auaunce
Emong eke for thy Ladie sake
Songes and complaintes that thou make
For that woll meuen in her harte
Whan thei reden of thy smarte
Looke that no man for scarce thee holde
For that maie greue thee manifolde
Reason woll that a louer be
In his yeftes more large and fre
Than churles that been not of louing
For who therof can any thing
He shall be lefe aie for to yeue
In londes lore who so would leue
For he that through a sodain sight
Or for a killing anon right
yaue hole his harte, in will and thought
And to himself kepeth right nought
After this swift, it is good reason
He yeue his good in abandon.

NOw woll I shortly here reherce
Of that I haue saied in verce
All the sentence by and by
In wordes fewe compendiously
That thou the better maiest on hem thinke
Whether so it be thou wake or winke
For the wordes little greue
A man to kepe, whan it is breue
Who so with Loue woll gon or ride
He mote be curteies, and voide of pride
Merie, and full of iolite
And of Largesse a losed be.

First I ioigne thee here in penaunce
That euer without repentaunce
Thou set thy thought in thy louing
To last without repenting
And thinke vpon thy mirthes swete
That shall folowe after whan ye mete.

And for thou true to Loue shalt be
I will, and commaunde thee
That in one place thou set all hole
Thine harte, without halfen dole
For trecherie and sikernesse
For I loued neuer doublenesse
To many his harte that woll depart
Euerich shall haue but little part
But of hem drede I me right nought
That in one place setteth his thought
Therefore in o place it set
And let it neuer thens flet
For if thou yeuest it in lening
I holde it but wretched thing
Therfore yeue it whole and quite
And thou shalt haue the more merite
If it be lent, than after soen
The bounte and the thankes is doen
But in Loue, free yeuen thing
Requireth a greate guerdoning
yeue it in yeft all quite fully
And make thy gift debonairly
For men that yeft holde more dere
That yeuen is with gladsome chere.

That

That gilte nought to praisen is
That man yeueth maugre his
Whan thou hast yeuen thine hert (as I
Haue said) the here openly
Than auentures shull the fall
Whiche harde and heuy ben with all
For ofte whan thou bethinkest thee
Of thy louing, where so thou be
Fro folke thou must depart in hie
That none perceiue thy maladie
But hide thine harme thou must alone
And go forth sole, and make thy mone
Thou shalt no while be in o state
But whilom colde and whilom hate
Now reed as Rose, now yelowe and fade
Such sorow I trow thou neuer hade
Cotidien, ne quarteine
It is not so full of peine
For often times it shal fal
In loue, among thy paines al
That thou thy selfe al holly
Forgetten shalt so vtterly
That many times thou shalt be
Still as an image of tree
Domme as a stone, without stering
Of fote or honde, without speking
Than sone after al thy paine
To memorie shalt thou come againe
A man abashed wonder sore
And after sighen more and more
For wit thou wele withouten wene
In suche astate ful ofte haue bene
That haue the iuel of loue assaide
Where through thou art so dismaide.

After a thought shal take the so
That thy loue is to ferre the fro
Thou shalt say (God) what may this be
That I ne may my lady se:
Mine hert alone is to her go
And I abide al sole in wo
Departed fro mine owne thought
And with mine eyen se right nought
Alas mine eien sene I ne may
My carefull herte to conuay
Mine hertes guide, but thei be
I praise nothing what euer thei se
Shul thei abide than, nay
But gone and visiten without delay
That mine hert desireth so
For certainly, but if thei go
A foole my selfe I may well holde
Whan I ne se what mine hert wolde
Wherfore I wol gone her to sene
Or eased shall I neuer bene
But I haue some tokening
Than gost thou forth without dwelling
But ofte thou failest of thy desire
Er thou maist come her any nere
And wastest in vaine thy passage
Than falest thou in a newe rage
For want of sight, thou ginnest murne
And homwarde pensife thou dost returne
In great mischefe than shalt thou be
For than againe shal come to thee
Sighes and plaintes with newe wo
That no itching pricketh so
Who wote it nought, he maie go lere
Of hem that bien loue so dere
No thing thine hert appesen maie
That oft thou wolt gone and assaie
If thou maist sene by auenture
Thy liues ioye, thine hertes cure
So that by grace, if thou might
Attaine of her to haue a sight
Than shalt thou done none other dede
But with that sight thine eyen fede
That faire fresche whan thou maist se
Thine hert shal so rauisshed be
That neuer thou woldest thy thankes lete
Ne remoue, for to se that swete
The more thou seest in sothfastnesse
The more thou conitest of that swetnesse
The more thine herte brenneth in fire
The more thine herte is in desire
For who considereth euery dele
It may be likened wonder wele
The paine of loue vnto a fere
For euermore thou neighest nere
Thought, or who so that it be
For very sothe I tel it thee
The hotter euer shal thou brenne
As experience shall the kenne
Where so comest in any coste
Who is next fire he brenneth moste
And yet forsothe for al thine hete
Though thou for loue swelte and swete
Ne for no thing thou kelen may
Thou shalt not willen to passe away
And though thou go, yet must the nede
Thinke al day on her faire hede
Whom thou beheldest with so good will
And holde thy selfe begiled ill
That thou ne haddest none hardiment
To shewe her aught of thine entent
Thine hert ful sore thou wolt dispise
And eke repreue of cowardise
That thou so dull in euery thing
Were domme for drede, without speking
Thou shalt eke thinke thou diddest foly

That thou were her so fast bie
And durst not auenture the to say
Some thing, er thou came away
For thou haddest no more wonne
To speke of her whan thou begonne
But yet she would for thy sake
In armes goodly the haue take
It should haue be more worthe to the
Than of tresour great plente
Thus shalt thou morne and ele complaine
And get encheson to gon againe
Unto thy walke, or to thy place
Where thou beheldē her fleshly face
And neuer for false suspection
Thou woldest finde occasion
For to gone vnto her house
So art thou than desirouse
A sight of her for to haue
If thou thine honour mightest saue
Or any erande mightest make
Thider, for thy loues sake
Ful faine thou woldest, but for drede
Thou goest not, leest that men take heds
Wherfore I rede in thy going
And also in thine againe comming
Thou be wel ware that men ne wit
Feine the other cause than it
To go that waie, or fast bie
To heale wel is no folie
And if so be it happe the
That thou thy loue there maiste se
In siker wise thou her salewe
Wherwith thy coloure woll transmewe
And ele thy bloud shal al to quake
Thy hewe ele chaungen for her sake
But worde and wit, with chere full pale
Shul want for to tell thy tale
And if thou maist so ferforth winne
That thou reason durst beginne
And woldest saine thre thinges or mo
Thou shalt ful scarsly saine the two
Though thou bethinke the neuer so wele
Thou shalt forgete yet somdele.

But if thou deale with trechery
For false louers mowe all foly
Sain what hem lust withouten dred
Thei be so double in her falshed
For thei in hert can thinke o thing
And saine an other in her speking
And whan thy speche is ended all
Right thus to the it shal befall
If any worde than come to minde
That thou to say hast left behinde
Than thou shalt brenne in great martire
For thou shalt brenne as any fire
This is the strife and ele the affraie
And the batell that lasteth aie
This bargaine ende may neuer take
But if that she thy peace wil make
And whan the night is comen anon
A thousande angres shal come vpon
To bed as fast thou wolte the dight
Where thou shalt haue but smal delight
For whan thou wenest for to slepe
So ful of paine shalt thou crepe
Sterte in thy bed about ful wide
And turne ful ofte on euery side
Now doun ward grosse, and now vpright
And walow in wo the long night
Thine armes shalt thou spredē a brede
As man in warre were forwerede
Than shal the come a remembraunce
Of her shape and her semblaunce
Wherto none other may be pere
And wete thou wel without were
That the shal se somtime that night
That thou hast her, that is so bright
Naked bitwene thine armes there
Al sothfastnesse as though it were
Thou shalt make castels than in Spaine
And dreme of ioy, al but in baine
And the deliten of right nought
While thou so slombrest in that thought
That is so swete and delitable
The whiche in sothe nis but a fable
For it ne shall no while last
Than shalt thou sighe and wepe fast
And say dere God, what thing is this
My dreme is turned al amis
Whiche was ful swete and apparent
But now I wake it is al shent
Now yede this mery thought away
Twenty times vpon a day
I would this thought would come againe
For it alegeth wel my paine
It maketh me ful of ioyfull thought
It sleeth me that it lasteth nought
Ah lorde, whi nil ye me socoure?
The ioye I trowe that I langoure
The deth I would me should slo
While I lie in her armes two
Mine harme is harde withouten wene
My great vneasē ful ofte I mene.

But would Loue do so I might
Haue fully ioye of her so bright
My paine were quitte me richely
Alas to great a thing aske I
It is but foly, and wrong wening

To aske so outragious a thing
And who so asketh folily
Ye mote be warned hastely
And I ne wote what I may say
I am so ferre out of the way
For I would haue ful great liking
And ful great ioy of lasse thing
For would she of her gentilnesse
Withouten more, me ones kesse
It were to me a great guerdon
Relese of all my passion
But it is harde to come therto
Al is but foly that I do
So highe I haue mine herte sette
Where I may no comfort gette
I wote not where I say wel or nought
But this I wote well in my thought
That it were bette of her alone
For to stinte my wo and mone
I loke on her I cast goodly
That for to haue al vtterly
Of an other al hole the play
Ay lord where I shal bide the day
That euer she shal my lady be
Ye is ful cured, that may her se
A God, whan shal the dauning springe
To leggen thus is an angry thing
I haue no ioy thus here to lie
Whan that my loue is not me bie
A man to lien hath great disese
Which maie not slepe, ne rest in ese
I would it dawed, and were now day
And that the night were went away
For were it daye, I would vp rise
Ay sowe sonne, shewe thine enprise
Spede the to sprede thy beemes bright
And chace the derknesse of the night
To put away the stoundes strong
Whiche in me lasten al to-long
The night shalt thou continue so
Without rest, in paine and wo
If euer thou knew of loue distresse
Thou shal nowe lerne in that sickenesse
And thus enduring shalt thou lie
And rise on morow vp erly
Out of thy bed, and harneis the
Er euer dawning thou maist se
Al priuely than shalt thou gone
What whider it be thy selfe alone
For reine, or haile, for snowe, for slete
Thider she dwelleth, that is so swete
The whiche maie fal a slepe be
And thinketh but litel vpon the
Than shalt thou go, ful soule aferde
Loke if the gate be vnsperde
And waite without in who and paine
Ful iuel a colde in winde and raine
Than shalt thou go the dore before
If thou maiste finde any shore
Or hole, or reste, what euer it were
Than shalt thou stoupe, and lay to eere
If thei within a slepe be
I mene al saue thy lady free
Whom waking if thou maist aspie
Go put thy selfe in iupardie
To aske grace, and the bimene
That she maie wete without wene
That thou night no rest hast had
So sore for her thou were bestad
Women wel ought pite to take
Of hem that sorowen for her sake
And loke for loue of that relike
That thou thinke none other like
For whan thou hast so great anney
Shall kisse the er thou go awey
And hold that in ful great deinte
And for that no man shall the se
Before the house, ne in the way
Loke thou begon againe er day
Suche comming, and suche going
Suche heminesse, and suche walking
Maketh louers withouten any wene
Under her clothes pale and lene
For Loue leueth colour ne cleernesse
Who loueth trewe hath no fatnesse
Thou shalt wel by thy selfe se
That thou must nedes allaied be
For men that shape hem other way
Falsely her ladies for to betray
It is no wonder though thei be fatte
With false othes her loues thei gatte
For ofte I se suche losengeours
Fatter than Abbottes or Priours.
yet with o thing I the charge
That is to say, that thou be large
Unto the maide, that her doth serue
So best her thanke thou shalte deserue
Yeue her giftes, and get her grace
For so thou may thanke purchace
That she the worthy holde and fre
Thy lady, and al that may the se
Also her seruauntes worship aie
And please as muche as thou maie
Great good through hem may come to the
Bicause with her thei ben priue
Thei shal her tel how thei the fande
Curteis and wise, and wel doande
And she shal preise wel the more
Loke out of londe thou be not fore
And if suche cause thou haue, that the

Behoueth to gone out of countre
Leaue hole thine hert in hostage
Til thou againe make thy passage
Thinke long to se the swete thing
That hath thine hert in her keping
Now haue I tolde thee, in what wise
A louer shal do me seruice
Do it than, if thou wolt haue
The mede, that thou after craue.

Whan Loue al this had boden me
I said him, sir how may it be
That louers may in suche manere
Endure the paine ye haue said here
I maruaile me wonder sore
How any man may liue or sore
In suche paine, and suche brenning
In sorow and thought, and suche sighing
Ne vnrelesed wo to make
Whether so it be thei slepe or wake
In suche anoy continuelly
As helpe me God this meruaile I
How man, but he were made of stele
Might liue a monthe, such paines to fele.

The God of Loue than said me
Frende, by the faith I owe to the
May no man haue good, but he it bie
A man loueth more tenderlie
The thing, that he hath bought most dere
For wete thou well without were
In thanke that thing is taken more
For which a man hath suffred sore
Certes no wo ne may attaine
Unto the sore of loues paine
None euil therto ne may amounte
No more than a man counte
The droppes that of the water be
For drie as wel the great see
Thou mightest, as the harmes tell
Of hem that with Loue dwell
In seruice, for peine hem sleeth
And that eche would fle the deeth
And trowe thei should neuer escape
Nere that hope couth hem make
Glad as man in prison sete
And maie not getten for to ete
But Barlie bread, and water pure
And lieth in vermin and in ordure
With al this yet canne he liue
Good hope suche comfort hath him yeue
Whiche maketh wene that he shal be
Deliuered and come to liberte
In fortune is full trust
Though he lie in straw or dust
In hope is al his sustaining
And so for louers in her wening
Whiche Loue hath shitte in his prisoun
Good hope, is her saluacioun
Good hope (how sore that thei smerte)
Yeueth hem bothe will and herte
To prefer her body to martire
For Hope so sore doth hem desire
To suffre eche harme that men deuise
For ioye that afterwarde shall arise.

Hope in desire catche victory
In hope of Loue is al the glory
For hope is all that Loue maie yeue
Nere hope, there should no lenger liue
Blessed be hope, whiche with desire
Auaunceth louers in suche manire
Good hope is curteise for to please
To kepe Louers from all disease
Hope kepeth his londe, and woll abide
For any peril that maie betide
For hope to louers, as most chiefe
Doth hem endure all mischefe
Hope is her helpe whan mister is
And I shal yeue thee eke iwis
Thre other thinges, that great solace
Doth to hem that be in my lace
The first good that maie be founde
To hem that in my lace be bounde
Is Swete thought, for to recorde
Thing wherwith thou canst accorde
Best in thine herte, where he be
Thinking in absence is good to the
Whan any louer doth complaine
And liueth in distresse, and in paine
Than Swete thought shal come as blithe
Awaie his angre for to drive
It maketh louers to haue remembraunce
Of comforte, and of highe pleasaunce
That Hope hath hight him for to winne
For thought anone than shal beginne
As ferre God wot, as he can finde
To make a mirrour of his minde
For to beholde he wol not let
Her person he shal afore him set
Her laughing eyen persaunt and clere
Her shape, her forme, her goodly chere
Her mouthe, that is so gracious
So swete, and eke so sauerous
Of al her feiters he shal take hede
His eyen with al her limmes fede.
Thus Swete thinking shall aswage
The paine of louers, and her rage
Thy ioye shal double without gesse
Whan thou thinkest on her semelinesse

Or of her laughing, or of her chere
That to the made thy lady dere
This comforte wol I that thou take
And if the nerte thou wolte forsake
Which is not lesse sauerous
Thou shouldest not ben to daungerous

The second shal be swete speche
That hath to many one be leche
To bring hem out of wo and were
And helpe many a bachelere
And many a lady sent socour
That haue loued paramour
Through speking, whan thei might here
Of her louers to hem so dere
To me it voideth al her smerte
The whiche is closed in her herte
In hert it maketh hem glad and light
Speche whan thei nowe haue sight
And therfore nowe it cometh to minde
In olde dawes as I finde
That Clerkes written that her knewe
There was a lady freshe of hewe
Whiche of her loue made a song
On him for to remembre among
In which she said, whan that I here
Speken of him that is so dere
To me it voideth al smerte
I wis he sitteth so nere mine herte
To speke of him at eue or morowe
It cureth me of al my sorowe
To me is none so highe plesaunce
As of his person daliaunce
She wist ful wel that Swete speking
Comforteth in ful moche thing
Her loue she had full well assaide
Of him she was ful wel apaide
To speke of him her ioye was set
Therefore I rede the that thou get
A felowe that can wel councele
And kepe thy counsaile, and welhele
To whom go shewe holly thine herte
Both wel and wo, ioye and smerte
To get comforte to him thou go
And priuely bitwene you two
Ye shal speke of that goodly thing
That hath thine hert in her keping
Of her beaute and her semblaunce
And of her goodly countenaunce
Of al thy state, thou shalt him saie
And alke him counsaile howe thou maie
Do any thing that maie her plese
For it to the shal do great ese
That he maie wete thou trust him so
Both of thy wele and of thy wo

And if his hert to loue be sette
His companie is moche the bette
For Reson wol he shewe to the
Al utterly his priuite
And what she is he loueth so
To the plainly he shal vndo
Without drede of any shame
Both tel her renome and her name
Than shall he forther ferre and nere
And namely to thy lady dere
In liker wise, ye euery other
Shal helpen as his owne brother
In trouthe without doublenesse
And kepen close in siluernesse
For it is noble thing in fay
To haue a man thou darste say
Thy preuy counsaile euery dele
For that woll comforte the right wele
And thou shalt holde the wel apaied
Whan suche a frende thou hast assaied.

The third good of great comfort
That yeueth to louers most disport
Cometh of sight and beholding
That cleped is Swete loking
The whiche may none ese do
Whan thou art ferre thy lady fro
Wherfore thou prese alway to be
In place, where thou maist her se
For it is thing moste amerous
Moste delitable and sauerous
For to asswage a mannes sorow
To sene his lady by the morow
For it is a ful noble thing
Whan thine eyen haue meting
With that relike precious
Whereof thei be so desirous
But al daie after sothe it is
Thei haue no drede to faren a mis
Thei dreden neither winde ne raine
Ne non other maner paine
For whan thine eyen were thus in blisse
Yet of her curtesie i wisse
Alone thei can not haue her ioye
But to the herte thei conuoye
Parte of her blisse to him thou sende
Of al this harme to make an ende
The eye is a good messangere
Which can to the hert in suche maners
Tidinges sende, that hath sene
To voide him of his paines clene
Wherof the hert reioyseth so
That a great partie of his wo
Is voided, and put away to flight
Right as the derknesse of the night

Is chased with clerenesse of the moone
Right so is al his wo ful soone
Devoided clene, whan that the sight
Beholden may that freshe wight
That the hert desireth so
That al his derkenesse is ago
For than the herte is all at ese
When thei sene that maie hem plese
Now haue I declared the al out
Of that thou were in drede and doute
For I haue tolde the faithfully
What the may curen utterly
And al Louers that wol be
Faithful, and ful of stabilite
Good hope alway kepe by thy side
And swete thought make the abide
Swete Loking and swete Speche
Of al thine harmes thei shalbe leche
Of euery thou shalt haue great plesaunce
Yf thou canst bide in sufferaunce
And serue well without fantise
Thou shalt be quite of thine empryse
With more guerdoun, if that thou liue
But al this time this I the yeue.

The God of Loue whan al the day
Had taught me, as ye haue herd say
And enformed compendously
He vanished away al sodainly
And I alone lefte al soole
So full of complaint and of doole
For I sawe no man there me by
My woundes me greued wonderly
We for to curen nothing I knewe
Saue the bothum bright of hewe
Wheron was sette holly my thought
Of other comforte knewe I nought
But it were through the God of Loue
I knew nat ele to my behoue
That might me ease or comfort gette
But if he would him entremette
The Roser was withouten dout
Closed with an hedge without
As ye to forne haue herde me saine
And fast I belied and would faine
Haue passed the hay, if I might
Haue getten in by any sleight
Unto the bothum so faire to se
But euer I dradde blamed to be
Yf men would haue suspection
That I would of entencion
Haue stole the Roses that there were
Therfore to enter I was in fere
But at the laste, as I bethought
Whether I should passe or nought

I sawe come with a gladde chere
To me, a lusty Bachelere
Of good stature and of good height
And Bialacoil forsoth he height
Sonne he was to Curtesie
And he me graunted ful gladlie
The passage of the utter hay
And said, sir: how that ye may
Passe, if your will be
The freshe Roser for to se
And ye the swete sauour sele
Your warrans may right wele
So thou the kepe fro folie
Shal no man do the vilanie
Yf I maie helpe you in ought
I shall not faine, dredeth nought
For I am bounde to your seruice
Fully devoide of feintise
Than unto Bialacoil saide I
I thanke you sir ful hertely
And your behest take at gre
That ye so goodly profer me
To you it cometh of great fraunchise
That ye me profer your seruise
Than after ful deliuerly
Through the briers anone went I
Wherof encombred was the haie
I was well plesed, the sothe to saie
To se the bothum, faire and swote
So freshe sprong out of the rote.

And Bialacoil me serued wele
Whan I so nigh me might sele
Of the bothum the swete odoure
And so lusky hewed of coloure
But than a chorle foule him betide
Beside the Roses gan him hide
To kepe the Roses of that Rosere
Of whom the name was Daungere
This chorle was hid there in the greues
Couered with grasse and with leues
To spie and take whom that he fonde
Unto that Roser put an honde
He was not soole, for there was mo
For with him were other two
Of wicked maners, and euil fame
That one was cleped by his name
Wicked tonge, God yeue him sorowe
For neither at eue ne at morowe
He can of no man good speke
On many a iuste man doth he wreke
There was a woman that eke hight
Shame, that who can reken right
Trespace was her fathers name
Her mother Reson, and thus was shame

Brought

Brought of these ilke two
And yet had trespace neuer adoe
With Reason, ne neuer leie her by
Ye was hidous and so vgly
I meane this, that Trespace hight
But Reason conceiueth of a sight
Shame of that I speake aforne
And whan that Shame was thus borne
It was ordained, that Chastite
Should of the Roser Lady be
Whiche of the bothums more and las
With sondrie folke assailed was
That she ne wiste what to doe
For Venus her assaileth so
That night and daie fro her she stall
Bothoms and Roses our all
To Reason than praieth Chastite
Whom Venus hath flemed ouer the see
That she her doughter would her leue
To kepe the Roser freshe and grene
Anon Reason to Chastite
Is fully assented, that it be
And graunted her, at her request
That Shame, bicause she is honest
Shall keper of the Roser be
And thus to kepe it, there were thre
That none should hardie be ne bolde
(Were he yong or were he olde)
Again her will awaie to bere
Bothoms ne Roses, that there were
I had well sped, had I nat been
I waited with these thre and seen
For Bialacoil, that was so faire
So gracious and debonaire
Quitte him to me full curtesly
And me to please badde that I
Should drawe to the bothom nere
Prese in to touche the Rosere
Whiche bare the Roses, he yafe me leue
This graunt ne might but littell greue
And for he sawe it liked me
Right nigh the bothom pulled he
A leafe all grene, and yaue me that
The whiche full nigh the bothom sat
I made of that leafe full queint
And whan I felt I was aqueinte
With Bialacoil and so priue
I wende all my will had be
That wert I hardie for to tell
To Bialacoil how me befell
Of Loue, that toke and wounded me
And saied, sir so mote I thee
I maie no foie haue in nowise
Upon no side, but it arise
For liche (if I shall not faine)
In harte I haue had so greate paine
So greate anoie and soche affraie
That I ne wotte what I shall saie
I drede your wrothe to deserue
Leuer me were, that knives kerue
My bodie should in peces small
Than in any wise it should fall
That ye wrothed should been with me
Saie boldely thy will (quod he)
I nill be wrothe if that I maie
For nought that thou shalt to me saie.

Than saied I sir, not you displease
To knowen of my greate vneale
In whiche onely Loue hath me brought
For paines greate, disease and thought
Fro daie to daie it doeth me drie
Supposeth not sir, that I lie
In me fiue woundes did he make
The sore of whiche shall neuer slake
But ye the bothom graunt me
Whiche is moste pallaunt of beaute
My life, my death, and my martyre
And treasour that I moste desire
Than Bialacoil affraied all
Saied sir, it maie not fall
That ye desire it maie not arise
What would ye shende me in this wise?
I mokell foole than I were
If I suffred you awaie to bere
The freshe bothom, so faire of sight
For it were neither skill ne right
Of the Roser ye broke the rinde
Or take the Rose aforne his kinde
Ye are not curteis to alle it
Let it still on the Roser sit
And let it growe till it amended be
And perfetly come to beaute
I nolde not that it pulled were
Fro the Roser that it bere
To me it is so leefe and dere
With that anon sterte out Daungere
Out of the place where he was hidde
His malice in his chere was kidde
Full greate he was and Blacke of hewe
Sturdie and hidous, who so him knewe
Like sharpe brychons his heere was growe
His yes red sparcling as the fire glowe
His nose frounced full kirked stoode
He come criande as he were woode
And saied, Bialacoil tell me why
Thou bringest hider so boldely
Him that so nigh the Rosere
Thou worchest in a wrong manere
He thinketh to dishonour thee

Thou art well worthy to haue maugre
To let him of the Rosere witte
Who serueth a Fellone is euill quitte
Thou wouldest haue doen greate bounte
And he with shame would quite thee
Flie hens felowe, I rede thee go
It wanteth little he woll thee slo
For Bialacoil ne knewe thee nought
Whan thee to serue he set his thought
For thou wolt shame him if thou might
Bothe again reason and right
I woll no more in thee affie
That comest so slightly for tespie
For it proueth wonder wele
Thy sleight and treason euery dele
I durst no more make there abode
For the chorle, he was so wode
So gan he thrette and manace
And through the haie he did me chace
For feare of him I trembled and quoke
So chorlishe his hedde he shoke
And saied, if eft he might me take
I should nat from his hondes scape
Than Bialacoil is fled and mate
And I all soole and disconsolate
Was left alone in pain and thought
Fro shame to death I was nigh brought
Than thought on my high folie
How that my bodie vtterlie
Was yeue to pain and to martire
And thereto had I so greate ire
That I ne durst the haies passe
There was no hope, there was no grace
I trowe neuer man wiste of pain
But he were laced in Loues chain
Ne no man, and soth it is
But if he loue, what anger is
Loue holdeth his heste to me right wele
Whan pain (he saied) I should fele
No harte maie thinke, no tong sain
A quarter of my wo and pain
I might not with the anger last
Mine harte in poinct was for to brast
Whan I thought on the Rose, that so
Was through Daunger cast me fro
A long while stode I in that state
Till that me sawe so madde and mate
The Ladie of the high ward
Whiche from her toure loked thiderward.

Reason men clepe that Lady
Whiche from her toure deliuerly
Come doune to me without more
But she was neither yong ne hore
Ne high ne lowe, ne fatte ne lene
But best, as it were in a meane
Her iyen two were clere and light
As any candell, that brenneth bright
And on her hedde she had a croune
Her semed well an high persone
For rounde enuiron her crounet
Was full of riche stones fret
Her goodlie semblaunt by deuise
I trowe was made in Paradise
For nature had neuer soche a grace
To forge a werke of soche compace
For certain, but if the letter lie
God himself, that is so hie
Made her after his image
And yafe her sithe soche auauntage
That she hath might and seignorie
To kepe men from all folie
Who so woll trowe her lore
Ne maie offenden neuermore.

And while I stode this derke and pale
Reason began to me her tale
She saied, alhaile my swete frende
Folie and childhod woll thee shende
Whiche thee haue put in greate affraie
Thou hast bought dere time of Maie
That made thine harte merie to be
In euill time thou wentest to se
The gardin, whereof Idelnesse
Bare the keie and was maistresse
Whan thou yedest in the daunce
With her and had acquaintaunce
Her acquaintaunce is perillous
First soft, and after noious
She hath trashed without wene
The God of Loue had thee nat sene
Ne had Idelnesse thee conueide
In the verge, where Mirthe him pleide
Ik folie haue supprised thee
Doe so that it recouered be
And be well ware to take no more
Counsaile, that greueth after sore
He is wise, that woll himself chastise
And though a yong man in any wise
Trespasse emong, and doe folie
Let him nat tary, but hastelie
Let him amende what so be mis
And ele I counsaile thee iwis
The God of Loue holly foryete
That hath thee in soche pain sete
And thee in harte tourmented so
I can not seen how thou maiest go
Other waies to garisoun
For daungere, that is so feloun
Fellie purposeth thee to werreie

Whiche is full cruell the lothe to seie.
And yet of Daunger cometh no blame
In reward of my doughter shame
Whiche hath the Roses in her warde
As she that maie be no musarde
And wicked tong is with these two
That suffreth no man thider go
For er a thing be doe he shall
Where that he cometh ouer all
In fourtie places, if it be sought
Saie thing that neuer was don ne wrought
So moche traison is in his male
Of falsenesse for to faine a tale
Thou dealest with angrie folke iwis
Wherefore to the better is
From these folke awaie to fare
For thei woll make thee liue in care
This is the euill that loue thei call
Wherein there is but folie all
For loue is folie euery dell
Who loueth, in no wise maie doe well
Ne set his thought on no good werke
His schole he leseth, if he be a clerke
Or other craft eke, if that he be
He shall not thriue therein, for he
In loue shall haue more passioun
Than Monke, Hermite, or Chanoun
This pain is heard out of measure
The ioie maie eke no while endure
And in the possession
Is moche tribulacion
The ioie it is so short lasting
And but in hape is the getting
For I se there many in trauaile
That at last foule faile
I was nothing thy counsailer
Whan thou were made the homager
Of God of Loue to hastely
Where was no wisedome but Folie
Thine harte was iolie, but not sage
Whan thou were brought in soche a rage
To yelde thee so redely
And to Loue of his greate maistrie

I Rede thee Loue awaie to driue
That maketh that reche not of thy liue
The folie more fro daie to daie
Shall growe, but thou it put awaie
Take with thy tethe the bridell faste
To daunt thy harte, and eke the caste
If that thou maiest to get the defence
For to redresse thy first offence
Who so his harte alwaie woll leue
Shall finde emong that shall him greue
Whan I her heard thus me chastice
I answerde in full angrie wise
I praied her cesse of her speache
Either to chastice me or teache
To bidde me my thought refrein
Whiche Loue hath caught in his demein
What wene ye Loue woll consent
(That me assaieth with bowe bent)
To drawe mine harte out of his honde
Whiche is so quickly in his bonde
That ye counsaile maie neuer be
For whan he first arested me
He toke mine harte so sore him till
That it is nothing at my will
He thought it so him for to obeie
That he it sparred with a keie
I praie you let me be all still
For ye maie well, if that ye will
Your wordes waste in idelnesse
For utterly, withouten gesse
All that ye saine is but in vain
Me were leuer die in the pain
Than Loue to me ward should arette
Falshede or treason on me sette
I woll me get pris or blame
And Loue true to saue my name
Who that me chastiseth, I him hate
With that worde Reason went her gate
Whan she sawe for no sermoning
She might me fro my folie bring
Than dismaied I left all soole
For werie, for wandred as a foole
For I ne knewe no cherisaunce
Than fell into my remembraunce
How Loue badde me to purueie
A felowe, to whom I might seie
My counsaile and my priuite
For that should moche auaile me
With that bethought I me, that I
Had a felowe fast by
True and siker, curteis, and hende
And he called was by name a frende
A truer felowe was no where none
In hast to him I went anone
And to him all my wo I told
Fro him right nought I would withold
I tolde him all without were
And made my compleint on Daungere
How for to seie he was hidous
And to me ward contrarious
The whiche through his cruelte
Was in poinct to haue meimed me
With Bialacoil whan he me seie
Within the gardin walke and pleie
Fro me he made him for to go
And I be left alone in wo

I durſt no lenger with him ſpeake
For Daunger ſaied he would be wreake
Whan that he ſawe how I went
The freſhe bothom for to hent
If I were hardie to come nere
Bitwene the haie and the Roſere.

This frende whan he wiſt of my thought
He diſcomforted me right nought
But ſaied felowe, be nat ſo madde
Ne ſo abaſhed nor beſtadde
My ſelf I knowe full well Daungere
And how he is fiers of chere
At prime temps, Loue to manace
Full oft I haue been in his caſe
I felon firſt though that he be
After thou ſhalt him couple ſe
Of long paſſed I knewe him wele
Ungoodlie firſt though men him fele
He woll meke after in his bearing
Been, for ſeruice and obeiſſing
I ſhall thee tell what thou ſhalt doe
Mekely I rede thou go him to
Of harte praie him ſpecially
Of thy treſpace to haue mercie
And hote him well here to pleaſe
That thou ſhalt neuer more him diſpleaſe
Who can beſt ſerue of flatery
Shall pleaſe Daunder moſte otterly.

My frende hath ſaied to me ſo weale
That he me eaſed hath ſomedeale
And che allegged of my tourment
For through him had I hardement
Again to daunger for to go
To priue if I might meke him ſo.

TO Daunger came I all aſhamed
The whiche afore me had blamed
Deſiring for to peaſe my wo
But ouer hedge durſt I nat go
For he forbode me the paſſage
I founde him cruell in his rage
And in his honde a greate bourdoun
To him I kneled lowe adoun
Full meke of port, and ſimple of chere
And ſaied ſir, I am comen here
Onely to aſke of you mercie
That greueth me full greatly
That euer my life I wrathed you
But for to amende I am come now
With all my might, bothe loude and ſtill
To doen right at your owne will
For Loue made me for to do
That I haue treſpaſſed hiderto
Fro whom I ne maie withdrawe mine hart
Yet ſhall I neuer for ioie ne ſmart
(What ſo befall good or ill)
Offende more again your will
Leuer I haue endure diſeaſe
Than doe that ſhould you diſpleaſe.

IF you require, and praie that ye
Of me haue mercie and pite.
To ſtint your ire that greueth ſo
That I woll ſweare for euermo
To be redreſſed at your liking
If I treſpace in any thing
Saue that (I praie thee) graunt me
A thing, that maie nat warned be
That I maie loue all onely
None other thing of you aſke I
I ſhall doen all i wis
If of your grace ye graunt me this
And ye maie nat letten me
For well wote ye that loue is fre
And I ſhall louen ſoche that I will
Who euer like it well or ill
And yet ne would I for all Fraunce
Doe thing to doe you diſpleaſaunce.

Than Daunger till in his entent
For to forgeue his male talent
But all his wrathe yet at laſt
He hath releaſed, I praied ſo faſt
Shortly (he ſaied) thy requeſt
Is nat to mokell diſhoneſt
Ne I woll nat werne it thee
For yet nothing engreueth me
For though thou loue thus euer mo
To me is neither ſofte ne ſore
Loue where that thee liſt, what retcheth me
So ferre fro my Roſes be
Truſt not on me for none aſſaie
In any time to paſſe the haie.
Thus hath he graunted my praier
Than went I forthe withouten were
Unto my frende, and told him all
Whiche was right ioifull of my tale
(He ſaied) now goeth well thine affaire
He ſhall to thee be debonaire
Though he afore was diſpitous
He ſhall hereafter be gracious
If he were touched on ſome good vein
He ſhould yet rewen on thy pein
Suffer I rede, and no boſte make
Till thou at good mes maieſt him take
By ſuffraunce, and wordes ſoft
A man maie ouercome oft
Him, that afore he had in dreede

In bokes sothly as I rede
Thus hath my frende with greate comfort
Iuaunced me with high disport
Whiche would me good, as moche as I
And than anon full sodainly
I toke my leaue, and streight I went
Unto the haie for greate talent
I had to seen the freshe bothom
Wherein laie my saluacion
And Daunger tolde kepe, if that I
Kepe him couenaunt truely
So sore I drede his manasing
I durst not breake his bidding
For least that I were of him shent
I brake not his commaundement
For to purchase his good will
It was for to come there till
His mercie was to serre behinde
I kept, for I ne might it finde
I complained and sighed sore
And languished euermore
For I durst nat ouergo
Unto the Rose I loued so
Throughout my deming vtterly
That he had knowlege certainly
Than Loue me ladde in soche wise
That in me there was no feintise
Falshedde, ne no trecherie
And yet he full of villanie
Of disdaine, and cruelte
On me ne would haue pite
His cruell will for to refrain
Tho I wept alwaie, and me complain.
AND while I was in this turment
Were come of grace, by God sent
Fraunchise, and with her Pite
Fulfilde the bothom of bonnte
Thei go to Daunger anon right
To serther me with all her might
And helpe in worde and in deede
For well thei sawe that it was nede
First of her grace dame Fraunchise
Hath taken of this empryse
She saied, Daunger greate wrong ye doe
To worche this man so moche woe
Or pinen him so angerlis
It is to you greate villanie
I can not se, why ne how
That he hath trespassed again you
Saue that he loueth, wherefore ye should
The more in charite of him hold
The force of loue maketh him doe this
Who would him blame he did amis
He leueth more than he maie doe
His pain is harde, ye maie se lo
And Loue in no wise would consent
That ye haue power to repent
For though that quiche ye would him slo
Fro Loue his harte maie nat go
Now swete sir, it is your ease
Him for to anger or disease
Alas, what maie it you auaunce
To doen to him so greate greuaunce
What worship is it again him take
Or on your man a werre make
Sithe he so lowlie euery wise
Is redy, as ye lustedeuise
If Loue haue caught him in his lace
You for to beie in euery caas
And been your subiect at your will
Should ye therfore willen him ill
Ye should him spare more all out
Than him that is bothe proude and stout
Curtesie would that ye succoure
Hem, that been meke vnder your cure
His harte is hard that woll not meke
Whan men of mekenesse him beseke

THis is certain, saied Pite
We se oft that Humilite
Bothe ire, and also felonie
Uenquisheth, and also melancolie
To stonde forthe in soche durelle
This cruelte and wickednelle
Wherefore I praie you sir Daungere
For to maintein no lenger here
Soche cruell werre again your man
Is holly yours as euer he can
Nor that ye worchen no more wo
Upon this caitife, that languisheth so
Whiche woll no more to you trespace
But put him holly in your grace
His offence ne was but lite
The God of loue it was to wite
That he your thrall so greatly is
And if ye harme him ye doen amis
For he hath had full hard penaunce
Sith that ye reft him thaquaintaunce
Of Bialacoil, his moste ioie
Whiche all his paines might acoie
He was before anoied sore
But than ye doubled him well more
For he of blisse hath been full bare
Sith Bialacoil was fro him fare
Loue hath to him greate distresse
He hath no nede of more duresse
Uoided from him your ire I rede
Ye maie not winnen in this dede
Maketh Bialacoil repaire again
And haueth pite vpon his pain

For fraunchise woll, and I pite
That mercifull to him ye be
And sithe that she and I accorde
Haue vpon him misericorde
For I you praie, and ehe moneste
Nought to refusen our requeste
For he is hard, and fell of thought
That for vs two woll doe right nought
Daunger ne might no more endure
He meked him vnto measure.

I woll in no wise, saieth Daungere
Denie, that ye haue asked here
It were to greate vncurtesie
I woll ye haue the companie
Of Bialacoil, as ye deuise
I woll him let in no wise
To Bialacoil than went in hie
Fraunchise, and saied full curteslie
Ye haue to long, be deignous
Vnto this louer, and daungerous
For him to withdraw we your presence
Whiche hath doe to him greate offence
That ye not would vpon him se
Wherfore a sorowfull man is he
Shape ye to paie him, and to please
Of my loue if ye woll haue ease
Fulfill his will, sith that ye knowe
Daunger is daunted and brought lowe
Through helpe of me and of Pite
You dare no more aferde be
I shall doe right as ye will
Saieth Bialacoil, for it is skill
Sith daunger woll that it so be
Than Fraunchise hath him sent to me

Bialacoil at the beginning
Salued me in his comming
No straungenesse was in him seen
No more than he ne had wrathed been
As faire semblaunt than shewed he me
And goodly, as aforne did he
And by the honde without doubt
Within the haie right all about
He lad me with right good chere
All enuiron the bergere
That daungere had me chased fro
Now haue I leaue ouer all to go
Now am I raised at my deuise
Fro hell vnto Paradise
Thus Bialacoil of gentilnesse
With all his pain and busines
Hath shewed me onely of grace
The ettets of the swote place
I sawe the Rose whan I was nigh
Was greater woxen, and more high
Freshe, roddy, and faire of hewe
Of colour euer iliche newe
And whan I had it long seen
I sawe that through the leues grene
The Rose spred to spannissing
To seen it was a goodly thing
But it ne was so spreade on brede
That men within might knowe the sede
For it couert was and close
Bothe with the leaues and with the Rose
The stalke was euen and grene vpright
It was therona goodly sight
And well the better without wene
For the seede was not seen
Full faire it spradd the God of blesse
For soche an other, as I gesse
Aforne ne was ne more vermaile
I was abawed for marueile
For euer the fairer that it was
The more I am bounden in loues laas
Long I abode there sothe to saie
Till Bialacoil I gan to praie
Whan that I sawe him in no wise
To me warnen his seruice
That he me would graunt a thing
Whiche to remember is well sitting
This is to saine, that of his grace
He would me yeue leisar and space
To me that was so desirous
To haue a kissing precious
Of the goodly freshe Rose
That so swetely smelleth in my nose
For if it you displeased nought
I woll gladly, as I haue sought
Haue a kisse thereof frely
Of your yeft, for certainly
I woll none haue, but by your leue
So lothe me were you for to greue.

He saied, frende so God me spede
Of Chastite I haue sothe drede
Thou shouldest not warned be for me
But I dare not for Chastite
Again her dare I not misdoe
For alwaie biddeth she me so
To yeue no louer leaue to kisse
For who thereto maie winnen i wisse
He of the surplus of the praie
My like in hope to get some daie
For who so kissing maie attain
Of Loues pain hath (loth to sain)
The best and moste auenaunt
And earnest of the remenaunt.

Of

Of his answere I sighed sore
I durst assaie him tho no more
I had suche drede to greue him aie
A man should not to muche assaie
To chase his frende out of measure
Nor put his life in auenture
For no man at the first stroke
He may not fel doune an oke
Nor of the reisins haue the wine
Till grapes be ripe and wel a fine
Be fore empressed, I you ensure
And drawen out of the pressure
But I forpeined wonder strong
Though that I abode right long
And after the kisse, in paine and wo
Sith I to kisse desired so
Till that renning on my distresse
There come Uenus the goddesse
(Whiche aie werrieth Chastite)
Came of her grace to socour me
Whose might is know ferre and wide
For she is mother of Cupide.

The God of Loue, blinde as stone
That helpeth louers many one
This lady brought in her right honde
Of brenning fire a blasing bronde
Wherof the flame and hote fire
Hath many a Lady in desire
Of Loue brought, and sore hette
And in her seruice her hert is sette
This Lady was of good entaile
Right wonderful of apparaile
By her atire so bright and shene
Men might perceiue well and sene
She was not of Religioun
Nor I nil make mencioun
Nor of robe, nor of trelour
Of broche, neither of her riche attour
Ne of her girdel about her side
For that I nil not long abide
But knoweth well, that certainly
She was arraied richely
Deuoide of pride certaine she was
To Bialacoil she went a paas
And to him shortely in a clause
She said, sir: what is the cause
Ye ben of porte so daungerous
Unto this louer, and dainous
To graunt him nothing but a kisse
To warne it him ye done amisse
Sithe well ye wot, how that he
Is Loues seruaunt, as ye may se
And hath beaute, wher through is
Worthy of Loue to haue the blis
How he is semely beholde and se
How he is faire, how he is free
How he is swote, and debonaire
Of age yonge, lusty, and faire
There is no Lady so hautaine
Duchesse, Countesse, ne Chastelaine
That I nolde holde her vngoodly
For to refuse him vtterly
His brethe is also good and swete
And eke his lippes roddy and mete
Onely to plaine, and to kisse
Graunt him a kisse of gentilnisse
His teth arne also white and clene
Me thinketh wrong withouten wene
If ye now warne him, trusteth me
To graunt that a kisse haue he
The lasse ye helpe him that ye haste
And the more time shul ye waste
Whan the flame of the very bronde
That Uenus brought in her right honde
Had Bialacoil with his hete smete
I none he bad me withouten lete
Graunt to me the Rose kisse
Than of my paine I ganne to lisse
And to the Rose anon went I
And kissed it ful faithfully
There nede no man aske, if I was blith
Whan the sauour softe and lith
Stroke to mine hert without more
And me allegged of my sore
So was I ful of ioye and blisse
It is faire suche a floure to kisse
It was so swote and sauerous
I might not be so anguishous
That I mote glad and ioly be
Whan that I remembre me
Yet euer among sothly to saine
I suffre noie and muche paine.

The see may neuer be so still
That with a litell winde at will
Ouerwhelme and tourne also
As it were woode in wawes go
After the calme the trouble soone
Mote folow, and chaunge as the moone
Right so fareth Loue, that selde in one
Holdeth his ancre, for right anone
Whan thei in ease wene best to liue
They ben with tempest all forriue
Who serueth Loue, can tel of wo
The stoundmele ioye mote ouergo
Now he hurteth, and now he cureth
For selde in o pointe Loue endureth.

Now is it right me to procede.

How Shame gan medle and take hede
Through whom fel angers I haue hade
And how the strong wall was made
And the Castell of brede and length
That God of Loue wan with his strength
Al this in Romance will I set
And for no thing ne will I let
So that it liking to her be
That is the floure of beaute
For she may best my labour quite
That I for her Loue shal endite
Wicked tonge that the couine
Of euery Louer can deuine
Worste, and addeth more somdele
(For wicked tonge saith neuer wele)
To mewarde bare he right great hate
Espying me erly and late
Til he hath sene the great chere
Of Bialacoil and me ifere
He might not his tonge withstonde
Worse to reporte than he fonde
He was so ful of cursed rage
It sat him wele of his linage
For him an Irishe woman bare
His tonge was filed sharpe and square
Poignaunt and right keruing
And wonder bitter in speking
For whan that he me gan espie
He swore (affirming sikerly)
Bitwene Bialacoil and me
Was euill aquaintaunce and priue
He spake therof so folilie
That he awaked Jelousie
Which all afraied in his rising
Whan that he herde iangling
He ran anon as he were wode
To Bialacoil there that he stode
Which had leuer in this caas
Haue ben at Reines or Amias
For fote hote in his felonie
To him thus said Jelousie
Why hast thou ben so negligent
To kepen, whan I was absent
This berger here lefte in thy warde
To me thou haddest no regarde
To trust (to thy confusion)
Him thus, to whom suspection
I haue right great, for it is nede
It is well shewed by the dede
Great faute in the nowe haue I founde
By God anon thou shalt be bounde
And fast locken in a Toure
Without refuite or socoure.

For shame to long hath be the fro
Ouer soone she was ago
Whan thou hast lost bothe drede & fere
It semed well she was not here
She was bely in no wise
To kepe the and chastice
And for to helpen Chastite
To kepe the Roser, as thinketh me
For than this boie knaue so boldly
Ne should nat haue be hardy
In this verge had suche game
Whiche nowe me tourneth to great shame.

Bialacoil nist what to saie
Ful faine he would haue fled awaie
For feare haue hid, nere that he
Al sodainly toke him with me
And whan I sawe he had so
This Jelousie take vs two
I was astoned, and knewe no rede
But fledde away for very drede.

Than Shame came forth ful simply
She wende haue trespaced ful greatly
Humble of her porte, and made it simple
Wearing a baile in stede of wimple
As Nonnes done in her Abbey
Bicause her hert was in affray
She gan to speke within a throwe
To Jelousie, right wonder lowe
First of his grace she besought
And said Sir, ne leueth nought
Wicked tonge, that false espie
Which is so glad to faine and lie
He hath you made, through flatering
On Bialacoil a false leasing
His falsnesse is not nowe a newe
It is to longe that he him knewe
This is not the first daie
For wicked tonge hath custome aie
Yonge folkes to bewrie
And false lesinges on hem lie.

yet neuertheless I se among
That the loigne it is so long
Of Bialacoil, hertes to lure
In Loues seruice for to endure
Drawing suche folke him to
That he hath nothing with to do
But in sothnesse I trowe nought
That Bialacoil had euer in thought
To do trespace or vilanie
But for his mother Curtesie
Hath thaught him euer to be
Good of aqueintaunce and priue

For he loueth none heuinesse
But mirth and play, and all gladnesse
He hateth al trechours
Soleine folke and enuious
For ye weten how that he
Wol euer glad and ioyful be
Honestly with folke to ply
I haue be negligent in good fey
To chastise him, therfore now I
Of hert I crie you here mercy
That I haue ben so recheles
To tamen him withouten lees
Of my foly I me repente
Now wol I hole set mine entent
To kepe both low and still
Bialacoil to do your will
Shame Shame (said Jelousy)
To be bitrashed great drede haue I
Lecherie hath clombe so hie
That almost blered is mine eie
No wonder is, if that drede haue I
Ouer al reigneth Lechery
Whose might groweth night and dey
Both in Cloistre and in Abbey
Chastite is werried ouer all
Therfore I woll with liker wall
Close bothe Roses and Rosere
I haue to longe in this manere
Lefte hem vnclosed wilfully
Wherfore I am right inwardly
Sorowfull, and repent me
But now thei shall no lenger be
Uncloseḍ, and yet I drede sore
I shal repent ferthermore
For the game goeth all amis
Counsaile I must newe iwis
I haue to long trusted the
But now it shal no lenger be
For he may best in euery coste
Disceiue, that men trusten moste
I se well that I am nigh shent
But if I set my full entent
Remedy to puruey
Wherfore close I shall the wey
From hem that woll the Rose espie
And come to waite me vilonie
For in good faith and in trouth
I wol not let for no slouth
To liue the more in sikernesse
Do make anon a fortresse
Than close the Roses of good sauour
In middes shal I make a tour
To put Bialacoil in prison
For euer I drede me of treson
I trow I shal him kepe so
That he shal haue no might to go
Aboute to make companie
To hem that thinke of vilanie
Ne to no suche as hath been here
Alone, and founde in him good chere
Whiche han assailed him to shende
And with her trowandise to blende
A foole is eith to begile
But may I liue a litel while
He shal forthinke his faire semblaunt
And with that worde came Drede auaunt
Whiche was abashed, and in great fere
Whan he wist Jelousie was there
He was for drede in suche affray
That not a worde durste he say
But quaking stode ful stil alone
(Til Jelousie his way was gone)
Saue Shame, that him not forsoke
Both Drede and he ful sore quoke
That at last Drede abraide
And to his Colin Shame saide.

Shame (he said) in sothfastnesse
To me it is great heuinesse
That the noise so ferre is go
And the sclaunder of vs two
But sithe that it is befall
We maie it not againe call
Whan ones sprong is a fame
For many a yere withouten blame
We haue ben, and many a day
For many an Aprill, and many a May
We han passed, not shamed
Til Jelousie hath vs blamed
Of mistrust and suspection
Causelesse, without encheson
Go we to Daunger hastely
And let vs shewe him openly
That he hath not a right wrought
Whan that he set not his thought
To kepe better the purprise
In his doing he is not wise
He hath to vs do great wrong
That hath suffred now so long
Bialacoil to haue his will
Al his lustes to fulfill
He must amende it vtterly
Or els shal he vilainously
Exiled be out of this londe
For he the warre maie not withstonde
Of Jelousie, nor the grete
Sithe Bialacoil is at mischefe.

TO Daunger Shame and Drede anon
The right way ben gon

The chorle thet founde hem aforne
Ligging vnder an hawethorne
Under his heed no pilowe was
But in the stede a trusse of gras
He slombred, and a nappe he toke
Til Shame pitously him shoke
And great manace on him gan make
Why slepest thou, whan thou should wake
(Od Shame) thou dost vs vilanie
Who trusteth the, he dothe folie
To kepe roses or bothoms
Whan they ben faire in her sesons
Thou art wore to familiere
Where thou should be straunge of chere
Stoute of thy porte, redy to greue
Thou dost great folie for to leue
Bialacoil here inne to call
The yonger man, to shenden vs all
Though that thou slepe, we may here
Of Jelousie great noise here
Art thou now late, rise vp an hie
And stoppe sone and deliuerly
All the gappes of the hay
Do no fauour, I the pray
It falleth nothing to thy name (blame.
To make fayre semblant, were thou mayste

IF Bialacoil be swete and free
Dogged and fel thou shouldest be
Froward and outragious iwis
A chorle chaungeth that curteis is
This haue I herde oft in saiyng
That man may for no daunting
Make a sperhauke of a bosarde
Al men wol holde the for musarde
That debonaire haue founden the
It sitteth the nought curteis to be
To do men plesaunce or seruise
In the it is recreaundise
Let thy werkes ferre and nere
Be like thy name, whiche is Daungere
Than al abashed in shewing
Anon spake Drede, right thus saiyng
And said, Daunger I drede me
That thou ne wolte besy be
To kepe that thou hast to kepe
Whan thou shouldest wake, thou art a slepe
Thou shalt be greued certainly
If the aspie Jelousy
Or if he finde the in blame
He hath to do assailed Shame
And chased away, with great manace
Bialacoil out of this place
And sweareth shortly that he shall
Enclose him in a sturdy wall
And al is for thy wickednesse
For that the faileth straungenesse
Thine hert I trowe be failed all
Thou shalt repent in speciall
If Jelousie the sothe knewe
Thou shalt forthinke, and sore rewe.

With that the chorle his clubbe gan shake
Frowning his eien gan to make
And hidous chere, as man in rage
For yre he brent in his visage
Whan that he herde him blamed so
He said, out of my witte I go
To be discomfite I haue great wrong
Certes I haue now liued to long
Sithe I may not this closer kepe
Al quicke I would be doluen depe
Yf any man shal more repayre
In to this garden for foule of fayre
Mine hert for ire gothe a fere
That I let any entre here
I haue do folly now I se
But now it shal amended be
Who setteth fote here any more
Truly he shall repent it sore
For no man more into this place
Of me to entre shall haue grace
Leuer I had with swerdes twaine
Throughout mine hert, in euery vaine
Perced to be, with many a wounde
Than slouthe should in me be founde
From henceforth by night or day
I shall defende it if I may
Withouten any excepcion
Of eche maner condicion
And if I it any man graunte
Holdeth me for recreaunte.

THan Daunger on his fete gan stonde
And hent a burdon in his honde
Wrothe in his ire ne left he nought
But through the verger he hath sought
If he might finde hole or trace
Where through that me mote forth by pace
Or any gappe, he did it close
That no man might touche a rose
Of the Roser al about
He shitteth euery man without
Thus day by day Daunger is wers
More wonderfull and more diuers
And feller eke, than euer he was
For him ful oft I singe alas
For I ne may nought, through his ire
Recouer that I most desire
Mine hert alas, wol brest a two

For

For Bialacoil I wrathed so
For certainly in euery membre
I quake, whan I me remembre
Of the bothom, whiche I wolde
Ful oft a day sene and beholde
And whan I thinke vpon the kisse
And how moche ioye and blisse
I had through the sauour swete
For want of it I grone and grete
Me thinketh I sele yet in my nose
The swete sauour of the Rose
And now I wote that I mote go
So ferre the freshe floures fro
To me ful welcome were the dethe
Absence therof (alas) me slethe
For whilom with this Rose, alas
I touched nose, mouthe, and face
But now the death I must abide
But Loue consent an other tide
That ones I touche maie and kisse
I trow my paine shal neuer lisse
Theron is all my couetise
Whiche brent my hert in many wise
Now shal repaire againe sighing
Long watche on nightes, and no sleping
Thought in wishing, turment, and wo
With many a turning to and fro
That halfe my paine I can not tell
For I am fallen into hell
From paradise and welthe, the more
My turment greueth more, and more
Inoleth now the bitternesse
That I to forne haue felte swetnesse
And wicked tonge, through his falsshede
Causeth all my wo and drede
On me he lieth a pitous charge
Bicause his tonge was to large.

Now it is time shortly that I
Tel you somthing of Jelousy
That was in great suspeccion
About him lefte he no maison
That stone coulde laie, ne querrour
He hired hem to make a tour
And first the Roses for to kepe
About hem made he a diche depe
Right wonder large, and also brode
Vpon the whiche also stode
Of squared stone, a sturdy wall
Whiche on a cragge was founded all
And right great thicknesse eke it bare
About it was founded square
In hundred fadome on euery side
It was al liche long and wide
Lest any time it were assailed
Ful wel about it was batailed
And rounde enuiron eke were set
Ful many a riche and faire tournet
At euery corner of this wall
Was set a tour ful principall
And eueriche had without fable
A portcolise defensable
To kepe of enemies, and to greue
That there her force would preue
And eke amidde this purprise
Was made a tour of great maistrise
A fairer saugh no man with sight
Large and wide, and of great might
Thei dradde none assaut
Of ginne, gonne, nor shaffaut
The temprure of the morter
Was made of licour wonder derer
Of quicke lime persaunt and egre
The whiche was tempred with vinegre
The stone was harde of Adamant
Wherof thei made the foundemaunt
The tour was rounde made in compas
In al this world no richer was
Ne better ordained there withall
About the tour was made a wall
So that betwixt that and the toure
Roses were set of swete sauoure
With many Roses that thei bere
And eke within the castel were
Springoldes, Gonnes, Bowes, and Archers
And eke about at corners
Men seine ouer the wall stonde
Great engins, who were nerehonde
And in the kernels here and there
Of arblasters great plentie were
None armour might her stroke withstonde
It were foly to preace to honde
Without the diche were listes made
With wal batailed large and brade
For men and horse should not attaine
To nigh the diche ouer the plaine
Thus Jelosie hath enuiron
Sette about his garnison
With walles rounde, and diche depe
Onely the Roser for to kepe
And Daunger erly and late
The keyes kept of the vtter gate
The whiche opened towarde the eest
And he had with him at leest
Thurty seruauntes echone by name
That other gate kept Shame
Whiche opened, as it was couthe
Towarde the parte of the Southe
Sergeauntes assigned were her to
Full many, her will for to do

Than Drede had in her baillie
The keping of the constablerie
Towarde the North I understonde
That opened vpon the lefte honde
The whiche for nothing may be sure
But if she do dely cure
Erly on morowe, and also late
Strongly to shette and barre the gate
Of euery thing that she may se
Drede is aferde, where so she be
For with a puffe of litell winde
Drede is astonied in her minde
Therfore for stealing of the Rose
I rede her nat the yate vnclose
A foules flight would make her fle
And eke a shadowe if she it se

THan wicked tonge full of Enuy
With soudiers of Normandy
As he that causeth all debate
Was keper of the fourthe gate
And also to the tother tyde
He went ful ofte for to se
Whan his lotte was to walke a night
His instrumentes would he dight
For to blowe and make soune
Ofter than he hath encheisoune
And walken oft vpon the wall
Corners and wickettes ouer all
Ful narowe serchen and espie
Though he nought fonde, yet would he lie
Discordaunt euer fro armonie
And distoned from melodie
Controue he would, and foule faile
With hornpipes of Cornwaile
In floites made he discordaunce
And in his musike with mischaunce
He would feine with notes newe
That he fonde no woman trewe
Ne that he sawe neuer in his life
Unto her husbonde a trewe wife
Ne none so ful of honestie
That she nil laugh and mery be
Whan that she hereth or may espie
A man spelien of Lecherie
Eueriche of hem hath some vice
One is dishoneft, an other is nice
Yf one be ful of vilanie
An other hath a licorous eie
If one be ful of wantonesse
An other is a chideresse.

Thus wicked tonge, God yeue him shame
Can put hem euerichone in blame
Without desert and causeleste.
He lieth, though thei ben giltleste
I haue pety to sene the sorowe
That waketh bothe euen and morowe
To innocentes doth suche greuaunce
I pray God yeue him euil chaunce
That he euer so besy is
Of any woman to seine amis
Eke Jelousie God confounde
That hath made a toure so rounde
And made about a garison
To sette Bialacoil in prison
The whiche is shette there in the tour
Ful long to holde there soiour
There for liue in penaunce
And for to do him more greuaunce
Whiche hath ordained Jelousie
In olde becke for to espie
The maner of his gouernaunce
The whiche Deuil in her enfaunce
Had lerned of loues arte
And of his pleis toke her parte
She was except in his seruise
She knewe eche wrenche and euery gise
Of Loue, and euery while
It was harde her to begile
Of Bialacoil she toke aie hede
That euer he liueth in wo and drede
He kepte him coye and eke priue
Leeft in him she had hadde se
Any foly countenaunce
For she knew all the olde daunce
And after this whan Jelousie
Had Bialacoil in his Baillie
And shette him vp that was so fre
For sure of him he would be
He trusteth sore in his castell
The strong werke him liketh well
He dradde nat that no glotons
Should steale his Roses or bothoms
The Roses weren assured all
Defenced with the strong wall
Now Jelousie full well may be
Of drede deuoide in liberte
Whether that he slepe or wake
For of his Roses may none be take.

But I (alas) now morne shall
Bicause I was without the wall
Ful muche dole and mone I made
Who had wist what wo I had
I trowe he would haue had pite
Loue to dere had solde me
The good that of his loue had I
I went about it al queintly
But nowe through dubling of my paine

I se he woll it sell again
And me a newe bargain lere
The whiche all out the moze is dere
Foz the solace that I haue lozne
Than I had it neuer afozne
Certain I am full like in deede
To him that caste in yearthy his seede
And hath ioie of the newe spzinging
When it greneth in the ginning
And is also faire and freshe of floure
Lustie to seen, swote of odoure
But er he it in his sheues shere
Maie fall a wether that shall it dere
And make it to fade and fall
The stalke, the greine, and floures all
That to the tillers is fordoen
The hope that he had to sone
I dzede certain that so fare I
Foz hope and trauaile likerly
Been me biraste all with a stozme
The floure nill seden of my cozne
Foz Loue hath so auaunced me
When I began my pziuite
To Bialacoil all foz to tell
Whom I ne founde froward ne fell
But toke agree all hole my plaie
But Loue is of so harde assaie
That all at ones he reued me
When I went best abouen to haue be
It is of Loue, as of foztune
That chaungeth oft, and nill contune
Whiche whilom woll of folke smile
And glombe on hem an other while
Now frende, now foe, shalt her sele
Foz a twincling tourneth her whele
She can wzithe her hedde awaie
This is the concourse of her plaie
She can areise that doeth mourne
And whirle adoune and ouertourne
Who sitteth hiest, but as her lust
A foole is he that woll her trust
Foz it is I that am come doune
Through charge and reuolucion
Sithe Bialacoil mote fro me twin
Shette in her pzison yonde within
His absence at mine harte I sele
Foz all my ioie and all mine hele
Was in him, and in the Rose
That but you woll, whiche him doeth close
Open, that I maie him se
Loue woll not that I cured be
Of the paines that I endure
Noz of my cruell auenture.

Ah, Bialacoil mine owne dere
Though thou be now a pzisonere
Kepe at least thine harte to me
And suffer not that it daunted be
Ne let not ielousie in his rage
Putten thine harte in no seruage
Although he chastice thee without
And make thy bodie vnto him lout
Haue harte as harde as Diamaunt
Stedfast, and naught pliaunt
In pzison though thy bodie be
At large kepe thine harte fre
A true harte will not plie
Foz no manace that it maie dzie
If Jelousie doeth thee pain
Quite him his while thus again
To benge thee at least in thought
If other waie thou maiest nought
And in this wise subtellie
Worche, and winne the maistrie
But yet I am in greate affraie
Least thou doe nat as I saie
I dzede thou canst me greate maugre
That thou enpzisoned art foz me
But that nat foz my trespace
Foz through me neuer discouered was
Yet thing, that ought be secre
Well moze annote is in me
Than is in thee of this mischaunce
Foz I endure moze harde penaunce
Than any can saine oz thinke
That foz the sozowe almoste I sinke
When I remember me of my wo
Full nigh out of my witte I go.
Inward mine harte I sele blede
Foz comfoztlesse the death I dzede
Owe I nat well to haue distresse
When false, through her wickednesse
And traitours, that arne enuious
To noien me, be so cozagious
Ah, Bialacoil full well I see
That thei hem shape to deceiue thee
To make thee buxum to her lawe
And with her cozde thee to dzawe
Where so hem lust, right at her will
I dzede thei haue thee bzought there till
Without comfozt, thought me slaeth
This game would bzing me to my death
Foz if your good will I lese
I mote be dedde I maie not chese
And if that thou forzete me
Mine harte shall neuer in liking be
Noz elswhere finde solace
If I be put out of your grace
Is it shall neuer been I hope

Than should I fall in wanhope
Alas, in wanhope: naie parde
For I woll neuer dispeired be
If hope me faile, than am I
Ungracious and vnworthy
In hope I woll comforted be
For Loue, whan he betaught her me
Saied, that Hope where so I go
Should aie be relees to my wo.
But what and she my bales bete
And be to me curteis and swete
She is in nothing full certain
Louers she put in full greate pain
And maketh hem with wo to dele
Her faire behestе deceiueth fele
For she woll behote sikerly
And failen after vtterly
Ah, that is a full noious thing
For many a louer in louing
Hangeth vpon her, and trusteth fast
Whiche lese her trauaile at the last
Of thing to commen she wote right nought
Therefore if it be wisely sought
Her counsaile folie is to take
For many times, whan she woll make
A full good silogisme, I drede
That afterward there shall in dede
Folowe an euill conclusion
This put me in confusion
For many times I haue it seen
That many haue begiled been
For trust that thei haue set in hope
Whiche fell hem afterward a slope.

But natheelle yet gladly she would
That he that woll him with her hold
Had all times her purpose clere
Without deceipt any where
That she desireth sikerly
Whan I her blamed I did foly
But what auaileth her good will
Whan she ne maie staunche my stound ill
That helpeth little that she maie doe
Out take behestе vnto my wo
And hestе certain in no wise
Without ifete is not to preise.

Whan hestе and deede a sonder vary
Thei doen a greate contrary
Thus am I posted vp and doune
With dole, thought, and confusioune
Of my disease there is no nomber
Daunger and Shame me encomber
Drede also, and Jelosie
And wicked Tong full of enuie
Of whiche the sharpe and cruell Ire
Full oft me put in greate martire
Thei haue my ioie fully let
Sith Bialacoil thei haue beshet
Fro me in prison wickedly
Whom I loue so entierly
That it woll my bane be
But I the soner maie him se
And yet more ouer worst of all
There is set to kepe, foule her befall
A Rimpled beche ferre ronne in rage
Frouning and yelowe in her visage
Whiche in awaite lieth daie and night
That none of hem maie haue a sight.

Yow mote my sorowe enforced be
Full sothe it is that Loue yafe me
Three wonder yeftes of his grace
Whiche I haue lorne now in this place
Sithe thei ne maie without drede
Helpen but little who taketh hede
For here auaileth no Swete thought
And swete Speache helpeth right nought
The third was called swete Loking
That now is lorne without lesing.

yeftes were faire, but nat for thy
Thei helpe me but simply
But Bialacoil loosed be
To gone at large and to be fre
For him my life lieth all in dout
But if he come the rather out
Alas I trowe it woll nat been
For how should I euermore him seen?
He maie nat out and that is wrong
Bicause the toure is so strong
How should he out, or by whose prowesse
Of so strong a forteresse?
By me certain it nill be doe
God wotte I haue no witte thereto
But well I wote I was in rage
Whan I to Loue did homage
Who was the cause (in sothfastnesse)
But her self dame Idelnesse
Whiche me conueide through faire praiere
To enter into that faire vergere
She was to blame me to leue
The whiche now doeth me sore greue
A fooles worde is nought to trowe
Ne worthe an apple for to lowe
Men should hem snibbe bitterlie
At prime temps of his folie
I was a foole, and she me leued
Through whom I am right nought releued
She accomplished all my will

That

That now me greueth wonder ill.

REason me saied what should fall
A foole my self I maie well call
That loue aside I had not laied
And trowed that dame Reason saied
Reason had bothe skill and right
Whan she me blamed, with all her might
To medle of Loue, that hath me shent
But certain now I will repent.

AND should I repent: Naie parde
A false traitour, than should I be
The deuils engins would me take
If I loue would forsake
Or Bialacoil falsly betraie
Should I at mischief hate him: naie
Sithe he now for his curtesie
Is in prison of Jelousie
Curtesie certain did he me
So moche, that it maie not yolden be
Whan he the haie passen me lete
To kisse the Rose, faire and swete
Should I therefore conne him maugre
Naie certainly, it shall nat be
For Loue shall neuer yeue good will
Here of me, through worde or will
Offence or complaint more or lesse
Neither of Hope nor Idelnesse
For certes it were wrong that I
Hated hem for her curtesie
There is not els, but suffre and thinke
And waken whan I should winke
Abide in hope, till loue through chaunce
Sende me soccour or allegeaunce
Expectaunt aie till I maie mete
To getten mercie of that swete.

Whilom I thinke how Loue to me
Saied he would take at gre
My seruice, if vnpacience
Caused me to doen offence
He saied, in thanke I shall it take
And high maister eke thee make
If wickednesse ne reue it thee
But sone I trowe that shall nat be
These were his wordes by and by
It semed he loued me truely.
Now is there not but serue him wele
If that I thinke his thanke to fele
My good mine harme, lithe hole in me
In Loue maie no defaute be
For true Loue ne failed neuer man
Sothly the faute mote nedes than
Is God forbide, be founde in me
And how it cometh, I can not se
Now let it gone as it maie go
Whether Loue woll succour me or slo
He maie doe hole on me his will
I am so sore bounde him till
From his seruice I maie not flene
For life and death withouten wene
Is in his hande, I maie nat chese
He maie me doe bothe winne and lese
And sithe so sore he doeth me greue
Yet if my lust he would acheue
To Bialacoil goodlie to be
I yeue no force what fell on me
For though I die, as I mote nede
I praie Loue of his goodlihede
To Bialacoil doe gentilnesse
For whom I liue in soche distresse
That I mote dien for penaunce
But first, without repentaunce
I woll me confesse in good entent
And make in haste my Testament
As louers doen that felen smarte
To Bialacoil leaue I mine harte
All hole, without departing
Or doublenesse of repenting.

Coment Raison vient a Lamant.

THus as I made my passage
In compleint, and in cruell rage
And I not where to finde a leche
That couthe vnto mine helping eche
Sodainly again comen doun
Out of her toure I sawe Reasoun
Discrete and wise, and full pleasaunt
And of her porte full auenaunt
The right waie she toke to me
Whiche stode in greate perplexite
That was posshed in euery side
That I nist where I might abide
Till she demurely sadde of chere
Saied to me as she came nere.
Mine owne frende, art thou greued
How is this quarell yet atcheued
Of loues side: Anone tell me
Hast thou not yet of Loue thy fill:
Art thou nat werie of thy seruice:
That thee hath in soche wise.
What iote haste thou in thy louing:
Is it swete or bitter thing
Canst thou yet chese, let me se
What best thy succour might be.

Thou seruest a full noble Lorde
That maketh thee thrall for thy rewarde

Whiche

Whiche aie reneweth thy tourment
With folie so he hath thee blent
Thou fell in mischief thilke daie
Whan thou diddest the sothe to saie
Obeisaunce and eke homage
Thou wroughtest nothing as the sage
Whan thou became his liege man
Thou diddest a greate folie than
Thou wistest nat what fell therto
With what Lorde thou haddest to doe
If thou haddest him well knowe
Thou haddest nought be brought so lowe
For if thou wiste what it were
Thou noldest serue him halfe a yere
Nat a weke, nor halfe a daie
Ne yet an houre without delaie
Ne neuer I loued paramours
His Lordship is so full of flours
Knowest him ought?
Lamaunt. Ye dame parde
Raisoun. Naie naie. Lamaunt, yes I
Raisoun. Wherefore let se
Lamaunt Of that he saied I should be
Glad to haue soche Lorde as (he)
And maister of soche seignorie
Raisoun. Knowest him no more?
Lamaunt. Naie certes I
Saie that he yafe me rules there
And went his waie, I nist where
And I abode bounde in balaunce
Lo, there a noble cognisaunce.

Raisoun.

But I woll that thou knowe him now
Ginning and ende, sithe that thou
Art so anguishous and mate
Disfigured out of astate
There maie no wreche haue more of wo
Ne caitife none enduren so
It were to euery man sitting
Of his Lorde haue knowleging
For if thou knewe him out of doute
Lightly thou shouldest scapen out
Of thy prison that marreth thee.

Lamaunt.

Me dame sithe my Lorde is he
And I his man made with mine honde
I would right faine vnderstonde
To knowe of what kinde he be
If any would enforme me.

Raisoun.

I would (saied Reason) thee lere
Sithe thou to learne hast soche desire
And shewe thee withouten fable
A thing that is not demonstrable
Thou shalt withouten science
And knowe withouten experience
The thing that maie not knowen be
Ne wist ne shewed in no degre
Thou maiest the sothe of it not witten
Though in thee it were written
Thou shalt not knowe thereof more
While thou art ruled by his lore
But vnto him that loue woll flie
The knotte maie vnclosed be
Whiche hath to thee, as it is founde
So long to knitte and not vnbounde
Now set well thine entencion
To heare of Loue the discripcion.

Loue it is an hatefull pees
A free acquitaunce without reles
And thrugh the fret full of falshede
A sikernesse all set in drede
In harte is a dispeiring hope
And full of hope it is wanhope
Wise Woodnesse, and voide Reason
A swete perill in to droun
An heauie burthen light to beare
A wicked wa we a waie to weare
It is Caribdes perilous
Dilagreable and gracious
It is discordaunce that can acorde
And accordaunce to discorde
It is conning without science
Wisedome without sapience
Witte without discrecion
Hauoire without possession
It is like heale and hole sickenesse
A trust drouned and dronkenesse
And healthy full of maladie
And Charite full of enuie
And angre full of aboundaunce
And a gredie suffisaunce
Delite right full of heuinesse
And dreried full of gladnesse
Bitter swetenesse and swete errour
Right euill sauoured good sauour
Sen that pardone hath withinne
And pardone spotted without sinne
A paine also it is ioious
And felonie right pitous
Also plaie that selde is stable
And stedfast right meuable
A strength weiked to stonde vpright
And feblenesse full of might

Witte

witte vnauised, sage folie
And ioie full of tourmentrie
A laughter it is weping aie
Rest that trauaileth night and daie
Also a swete hell it is
And a sorowfull Paradis
A pleasaunt gaile and easie prisoun
And full of froste Somer seasoun
Prime temps full of frostes white
And Maie deuoide of all delite
With seer braunches blossoms vngrene
And newe fruict filled with Winter tene
It is a flowe maie nat forbeare
Ragges ribaned with gold to weare
For also well woll loue be sette
Under ragges as riche rotchette
And eke as well by amorettes
In mourning blacke, as bright burnettes
For none is of so mokell prise
Ne no man founden so wise
Ne none so high of parage
Ne no man founde of witte so sage
No man so hardie ne so wight
Ne no man of so mokell might
None so fulfilled of bounte
That he with Loue maie daunted be
All the worlde holdeth this waie
Loue maketh all to gone miswaie
But it be thei of euill life
Whom Genius cursed man and wife
That wrongly werke again nature
None soche I loue, ne haue no cure
Of soche as loues seruauntes been
And woll nat by my counsale sleen
For I ne preise that louing
Where through man at the last ending
Shall call hem wretches full of wo
Loue greueth hem and shendeth so
But if thou wolt well loue eschewe
For to escape out of his mewe
And make all hole the sorowe to slake
No better counsaile maiest thou take
Than thinke to sleen well iwis
Maie nought helpe els, for wit thou this
If thou flie it, it shall flie thee
Folowe it, and folowen shall it thee.

Clamaunt.

Whan I had heard Reason sain
Whiche had spilt her speache in vain
Dame (saied I) I dare well saie
Of this auaunt me well I maie
That from your schole so deuiaunt
I am, that neuer the more auaunt
Right nought am I through your doctrine
I dulle vnder your discipline
I wot no more than wiste euer
To me so contrarie and so fer
Is euery thing that ye me lere
And yet I can it all by partuere
Mine harte foryeteth thereof right nought
It is so written in my thought
And depe graue it is so tender
That all mine harte I can it render
And rede it ouer communely
But to my self lewdest am I.

But sithe ye Loue discriuen so
And lacke and preise it bothe two
Defineth it into this letter
That I maie thinke on it the better
For I heard neuer diffined here
And wilfully I would it lere
If loue be searched well and sought
It is a sickenesse of the thought
Annexed and knedde betwixt tweine
With male and female with o cheine
So frelie that bindeth, that thei nill twinne
Whether so thereof thei lese or winne
The roote springeth through hote brenning
In to disordinate desiring
For to kissen and embrace
And at her lust them to solace
Of other thing loue retcheth nought
But setteth her harte and all her thought
More for delectacioun
Than any procreacioun
Of other fruict by engendrure
Whiche loue to God is nat pleasure
For of her bodie fruicte to get
Thei yeue no force, thei are so set
Upon delite to plaie in fere
And some haue also this manere
To fainen hem for Loue seke
Soche loue I preise not at a leke
For paramours thei doe but faine
To loue truely thei disdaine
Thei false false ladies traitourlly
And swerne hem othes vtterly
With many a leasing, and many a fable
And all thei finden disceiuable
And whan thei han her lust getten
The hote ernes thei all foryetten
Women the harme bien full sore
But men this thinken euermore
The lasse harme is, so mote I thee
Disceiue them, than disceiued be
And namely where thei ne maie
Finde none other meane waie
For I wote well in sothfastnesse

That

That what doeth now his businesse
With any woman for to dele
For any lust that he maie sele
But if it be for engendrure
He doeth trespasse I you ensure
For he should setten all his will
To getten a likely thing him till
And to sustain, if he might
And kepe forth by kindes right
His owne likenesse and semblable
For bicause all is corrumpable
And faile should succession
Ne were their generacioun
Our sectes sterne for to saue
Whan father or mother arne in graue
Her children should, whan thei been bede
Full diligent been in her stede
To vse that warke on soche a wise
That one maie through an other rise
Therefore set kinde therein delite
For men therein should hem delite
And of that deede be not erke
But oft sithes haunt that werke
For none would drawe thereof a draught
Ne were delite, whiche hath him caught
This had subtill dame Nature
For none goeth right I thee ensure
Ne hath entent hoole ne parfite
For her desire is for delite
The whiche forfened creasse, and eke
The plaie of Loue, for oft seke
And thrall hem self thei be so nice
Unto the Prince of euery vice
For of echelinne it is the roote
Unlefull lust, though it be soote
And of all euill the racine
As Tullius can determine
Whiche in his time was full sage
In a booke he made of age
Where that more he praiseth elde
Though he be croked and vnwelde
And more of commendacioun
Than youth in his discripcioun
For youth set bothe man and wife
In all parell of soule and life
And parell is, but men haue grace
The parell of youth for to pace
Without any death or distresse
It is so full of wildnesse
So oft it doeth shame and domage
To him or to his linage
It leadeth man, now vp now doun
In mokell dissolucioun
And maketh him loue euill companie
And lede his life disrulilie
And halte him paied with none estate
Within himself is soche debate
He chaunged purpose and entent
And yalte in to some couent
To liuen after her emprise
And leseth fredome and fraunchise
That nature in him had set
The whiche again he maie not get
If he there make his mansion
For to abide profession
Though for a time his harte absent
It maie not faile, he shall repent
And eke abide thilke daie
To leaue his abite, and gon his waie
And leaseth his worship and his name
And dare not come again for shame
But all his life he doeth so mourne
Bicause he dare not home retourne
Fredome of kinde so lost hath he
That neuer maie recured be
But that if God him graunt grace
That he maie, er he hence pace
Contein vnder obedience
Through the vertue of pacience
For youth set man in all folie
In vnthrift and in ribaudrie
In lecherie, and in outrage
So oft it chaungeth of corage
Youth ginneth oft soche bargain
That maie not ende without pain
In greate parell is set youth hede
Delite so doeth his bridell lede
Delite this hangeth, drede thee nought
Bothe mannes bodie and his thought
Onely through youthes chambere
That to doen euill is customere
And of naught els taketh hede
But onely folkes for to lede
Into disport and wildenesse
So is froward from sadnesse
But elde draweth hem therfro
Who wote it not, he maie well go
And mo of hem, that now arne old
That whilom youth had in hold
Whiche yet remembreth of tender age
How it him brought in many a rage
And many a folie therin wrought
But now that elde hath him through sought
Thei repent hem of her folie
That youth hem put in ieopardie
In parell and in moche wo
And made hem oft amisse to doe
And sewen euill companie
Riot and aduoutrie.

But elde gan againe restraine
From suche folye, and refraine
And set men by her ordinaunce
In good rule and gouernaunce
But euil she spendeth her seruise
For no man wol her loue, neither preise
She is hated, this wote I wele
Her acqueintaunce would no man fele
Ne han of elde companie
Men hate to be of her alie
For no man wold becomen olde
Ne die, whan he is yonge and bolde
And elde meruaileth right greatly
Whan thei remembre hem in wardly
Of many a perillous empryse
Whiche that thei wrought in sondry wise
Howeuer thei might without blame
Escape awaie without shame
In youth without domage
Or repreue of her linage
Losse of membre, shedyng of blood
Parel of death, or losse of good
Wost thou nat where youthe abit
That men so preisen in her wit?
With Delite the halte soiour
For both thei dwellen in o tour
As long as youthe is in season
Thei dwellen in one mansion
Delite of youth woll haue seruice
To do what so he woll deuise
And youth is redy euermore
For to obey for smerte of sore
Unto Delite, and him to yeue
Her seruice, while that she maie liue.

Where elde abitte, I wol the tell
Shortly, and no while dwell
For thider behoueth the to go
Yf death in youth the not slo
Of this iourney thou maiste not faile
With her labour and trauaile
Lodged ben with sorow and wo
That neuer out of her court go
Paine and distresse, sickenesse, and ire
And melancoly that angry lire
Ben of her paleis senatours
Groning and grutching, her herbegeours
The day and night her to tourment
With cruell death thei her present
And tellen her erliche and late
That death stondeth armed at her gate
Than bring thei to her remembraunce
The foly dedes of her enfaunce
Whiche causen her to mourne in wo
That youth hath her begiled so
Whiche sodainly awaie is hasted
She weped the time that she hath wasted
Complaining of the preteritte
And the present, that nat abitte
And of her olde banite
That but afore ne her she maie se
In the future some socoure
To leggen her of her doloure
To graunt her time of repentaunce
For her sinnes to do penaunce
And at the last so her gouerne
To winne the ioye that is eterne
Fro whiche go backwarde youth he mads
In banite to drowne and wade
For present time abideth nought
It is more swifte than any thought
So litell while it doth endure
That there nis compte ne measure
But how that euer the game go
Who list to loue ioye and mirth also
Of loue, be it he or she
Hie or lowe who it be
In frute thei should hem delite
Her parte thei maie not els quite
To saue hem selfe in honeste
And yet full many one I se
Of women, sothly for to saine
That desire, and would faine
The plaie of Loue, thei be so wilde
And not coueite to go with childe
And if with childe thei be perchaunce
Thei wol it holde a great mischaunce
But what so euer wo thei fele
Thei wol not plaine, but counsele
But if it be any foole or nice
In whome that shame hath no iustice
For to Delite echone thei drawe
That haunt this worke both hie and lawe
Saue suche that arne worthy right nought
That for money wol be bought
Suche loue I preise in no wise
Whan it is giuen for couetise
I preise no woman, though so be woode
That yeueth her selfe for any goode
For litell should a man telle
Of her, that wil her body selle
Be she maide, be she wife
That quicke wol selle her by her life
How faire chere that euer she make
He is a wretche I vndertake
That loued suche one, for swete or soure
Though she him called her paramoure
And laugheth on him, and maketh him feest
For certainly no suche beest
To be loued is nat worthy

Or beare the name of Drury
None should her please, but he wer woode
That wol dispoile him of his goode
Yet natheless I wol not saie
That she for solace and for plaie
Make a Jewel or other thing
Take of her loues free yeuing
But that she aske it in no wise
For drede of shame, or couetise
And she of hers maie him certaine
Without sclaunder yeuen againe
And ioyne her hertes togider so
In loue, and take and yeue also
Trowe nat that I wol hem twinne
Whan in her loue there is no sinne
I wol that thei togider go
And done al that thei han ado
As curtes should and debonaire
And in her loue beren hem faire
Without vice, both he and she
So that alwaie in honeste
Fro folly loue to kepe hem clere
That brenneth hertes with his fere
And that her loue in any wise
Be deuoide of couetise
Good loue should engendred be
Of trewe hert, iuste, and secree
And not of suche as set her thought
To haue her lust, and els nought
So are thei caught in loues lace
Trewly for bodily solace
Fleshely delite is so present
With the, that set al thine entent
Without more, what should I glose
For to get and haue the Rose
Whiche maketh the so mate and wood
That thou desirest none other good
But thou art not an inche the nerre
But euer abidest in sorow and warre
As in thy face it is sene
It maketh the bothe pale and lene
Thy might, thy vertue gothe awaie
A sory gest in good faie
Thou herborest in thine inne
The God of Loue whan thou let inne
Wherfore I rede thou shette him oute
Or he shal greue the out of doute
For to thy profite it wol turne
If he no more with the soiourne
In great mischefe and sorow sonken
Ben hertes, that of Loue arne dronken
As thou peraventure knowen shall
Whan thou hast lost the time all
And spent by thought in idelnesse
In walke, and wofull lustinesse
Yf thou maist liue the time to se
Of loue for to deliuered be
Thy time thou shalt bewepe sore
The whiche neuer thou maist restore
For time lost, as men may se
For nothing may recouered be
And if thou scape, yet at laste
Fro loue that hath the so faste
Knitte and bounden in his lace
Certaine I holde it but a grace
For many one as it is seine
Haue loste, and spent also in veine
In his seruice without socour
Body and soule, good, and treasour
witte, and strength, and eke richesse
Of whiche thei had neuer redresse.

¶ Lamant.

THus taught and preched hath Reson
But Loue spilte her sermon
That was so imped in my thought
That her doctrine I set at nought
And yet ne saide she neuer a dele
That I ne vnderstode it wele
Worde by worde the mater all
But vnto Loue I was so thrall
Whiche calleth ouer all his praie
He chaseth so my thought aie
And holdeth mine herte vnder his sele
As trusty and trewe as any stele
So that no deuocion
Ne had I in the Sermon
Of dame Reson, ne of her rede
I toke no soiour in mine heede
For all yede out at one ere
That in that other she did lere
Fully on me she lost her lore
Her speche me greued wonder sore.

THat vnto her for ire I saide
For anger, as I did abraide
Dame, and is it your will algate
That I not Loue, but that I hate
All men, as ye me teche
For if I do after your speche
Sith that you seine Loue is not good
Than must I nedes say with mode
Yf I it leue, in hatred aie
Liuen, and voide Loue awaie
From me a sinful wretche
Hated of al that tetche
I may not go none other gate
For either must I loue or hate
And if I hate men of newe

More than Loue, it wol me rewe
Is by your preching semeth me
For Loue nothing ne praiseth the
Ye yeue good counsaile likerly
That precheth me al day, that I
Should not loues lore alowe
Ye were a foole woulde you not trowe
In speche allo ye han me taught
Inother loue that knowen is naught
Whiche I haue herde you not repreue
To loue eche other by your leue
If ye would diffine it me
I would gladly here to se
At the leest if I may lere
Of sondry loues the manere.

Raison.

Certes frende, a foole art thou
Whan that thou nothing wolt alow
That I for thy profite laie
yet wol I laie the more in laie
For I am redy at the leest
To accomplisshe thy request
But I not where it wol auelle
In vaine parauenture I shall travelle
Loue there is in sondre wise
As I shall the here deuise
For some loue leful is and goode
I meane not that whiche maketh the woode
And bringeth the in many a litte
And ravisheth fro the al thy witte
It is so marueilous and queint
With suche loue be no more aqueint.

Cõment Raison diffinist Vnsete.

Loue of frendshippe also there is
Whiche maketh no man don a mis
Of wil knitte bet wirt two
That wol not breke for wele ne wo
Whiche long is likely to continue
Whan wil and goodes ben in commune
Grounded by goddes ordinaunce
Hoole without discordaunce
With hem holding conmaunce
Of al her good in charite
That there be none exceptioun
Through chaunging of ententioun
That eche helpe other at her nede
And wisely hele bothe worde and dede
Trewe of meaning, devoide of slouthe
For wit is nought without trouthe
So that the tone dare all his thought
Saine to his frende, and spare nought
As to him selfe without dreding
To be discovered by weiying
For glad is that coniunctioun
Whan there is none suspectioun
Whome thei would proue
That trewe and perfite weten in Loue
For no man may be amiable
But if he be so ferme and stable
That fortune chaunge him not ne blinde
But that his frende alway him finde
Bothe pore and riche in o state
For if his frende through any gate
Wol complaine of his pouerte
He should not bide so long, til he
Of his helping him require
For good dede done throughe praiere
Is solde and bought to dere i wis
To hart that of great valure is
For hart fulfilled of gentilnesse
Can euill demeane his distresse
And man that worthy is of name
To asken often hath great shame
A good man brenneth in his thought
For shame whan he asketh ought
He hath great thought, and dredeth aie
For his disease whan he shal praie
His frende, lest that he warned be
Till that he preue his stabilite
But whan that he hath founden one
That trusty is and trewe as stone
And assaied him at all
And founde him stedfast as a wall
And of his frendshippe be certaine
He shal him shewe, bothe ioie and paine
And all that dare thinke or saie
Without shame, as he well maie
For how should he ashamed be
Of suche one as I tolde the
For whan he wot his secret thought
The third shall know therof right nought
For twey in nombre it bet than thre
In euery counsaile and secree
Repreue he dredeth neuer a dele
Who that belet his wordes wele
For euery wise man out of drede
Can kepe his tong till he se nede
And fooles can not holde her tonge
A fooles belle is soone ronge
yet shall a trewe frende do more
To helpe his felowe of his lore
And socour him whan he hath nede
In all that he may done in dede
And gladder that he him pleaseth
Than his felowe that he easeth

And if he do nat his requeſt
He ſhal as muche him moleſt
As his felowe, for that he
Maie not fulfill his volunte
Fully, as he hath required
If bothe the hertes loue hath fired
Joye and wo thei ſhal departe
And take euenly eche his parte
Halfe his anoye he ſhal haue aie
And comforte what that he maie
And of this bliſſe parte ſhal he
If Loue woll departed be.

AND whilom of this vnite
Spake Tullius in a dite
And ſhould maken his requeſt
Unto his frende, that is honeſt
And he goodly ſhould it fulfill
But if the more were out of ſkill
And otherwiſe not graunt therto
Except only in cauſes two
Yf men his frende to dethe would driue
Let him be buſy to ſaue his liue
Alſo if men wollen him aſſaile
Of his worſhip to make him faile
And hinderen him of his renoun
Let him wit ful entencioun
His deuer done in eche degre
That his frende ne ſhamed be
In this two caſe with his might
Taking no hede to ſkill nor right
As ferre as Loue may him excuſe
This ought no man to refuſe
This Loue that I haue tolde to the
Is nothing contrarie to me
This wol I that thou folowe wele
And leue the tother euery dele
This Loue to vertue al entendeth
The tother fooles blent and ſhendeth.

Another Loue alſo there is
That is contrary vnto this
Whiche deſire is ſo conſtrained
That is but wil fained
Away fro trouthe it doth ſo varie
That to good Loue it is contrarie
For it maymeth in many wiſe
Sike hertes with couetiſe
All in winning and in profite
Suche loue ſetteth his delite
This loue ſo hangeth in balaunce
That if it leſe his hope parchaunce
Of lucre, that he is ſet vpon
It wol faile, and quenche anon
For no man maie be amorous
Ne in his liuing vertuous
But he loue more in moode
Men for hem ſelfe, than for her goode
For loue that profite doth abide
Is falſe, and bideth not in no tide
Loue cometh of dame Fortune
That litel while woll contune
For it ſhal chaungen wonders ſoone
And take Eclips as the Moone
Whan he is from vs let
Through earth, that betwirt is ſet
The ſonne and her, as it may fall
Be it in partie, or in all
The ſhadowe maketh her bemes merke
And her hornes to ſhewe derke
That part, where ſhe hath loſt her light
Of Phebus fully, and the ſight
Till whan the ſhadowe is ouerpaſte
She is enlumined agein as faſte
Through the brightnes of the ſonne bemes
That yeueth to her againe her lemes
That Loue is right of ſuche nature
Now is faire, and now obſcure
Now bright, now Cliply of manere
And whilom dimme, and whilom clere
As ſoone as pouerte ginneth take
With mantel and weedes blake
Hideth of Loue the light away
That into night it tourneth day
It may not ſe richeſſe ſhine
Till the blacke ſhadowes fine
For whan richeſſe ſhineth bright
Loue recouereth ayen his light
And whan it faileth, he wol flit
And as ſhe greueth, ſo greueth it
Of this Loue here what I ſaie
The riche men are loued aie
And namely tho that ſparande bene
That wol not waſhe her hertes clene
Of the filth, nor of the vice
Of gredy brenning Iuarice
The riche man ful fonde is iwis
That weneth that he loued is
If that his hert it vnderſtode
It is not he, it is his goode
He may wel weten in his thought
His good is loued, and he right nought
For if he be a nigarde eke
Men wol not ſet by him a leke
But haten him, this is the ſothe
Lo what profite his catel dothe
Of euery man that may him ſe
It getteth him nought but enmite
But he amende him ſelfe of that vice
And know him ſelfe, he is not wiſe

Certes

Certes he should aie frendly be
To get him loue also ben fre
Or els he is not wise ne sage
No more than is a gote ramage
That he not loueth his dede prouethy
whan he his richesse so well loueth
That he wol hide it aie and spare
His pore frendes sene forfare
To kepen aie his purpose
Till fordrede his eien close
And til a wicked death him take
Him had leuer a sondre shake
And let al his limmes a sondre riue
Than leaue his richesse in his liue
Yethinketh to part it with no man
Certain no loue is in him than
How should loue within him be
whan in his hert is no pite
That he trespaseth well I wate
For eche man knoweth his estate
For wel him ought to be reproued
That loueth nought, ne is not loued
But sithe we arne to fortune comen
And hath our sermon of her nomen
I wonder will I tell thee now
Thou herdest neuer suche one I trew
I not where thou me leuen shall
Though sothfastnesse it be all
As it is written, and is sothe
That vnto men more profite dothe
The frowarde fortune and contrarie
Than the swote and debonaire
And if the thinke it is doutable
It is through argument prouable
For the debonaire and softe
Falseth and begileth ofte
For liche a mother she can cherishe
And milken as dothe a norice
And of her good to him deles
And yeueth him parte of her ioweles
With great riches and dignite
And hem she hoteth stabilite
In state that is not stable
But chaunging aie and variable
And fedeth him with glory veine
And worldely blisse none certeine
whan she him setteth on her whele
Than wene thei to be right wele
And in so stable state withall
That neuer thei wene for to fall
And whan thei sette so high to be
Thei wene to haue in certainte
Of hertly frendes to great nombre
That nothing might her state encombre
Thei trust hem so on euery side
Wening with him thei would abide
In euery paril and mischaunce
Without chaunce or variaunce
Bothe of catel and of good
And also for to spende her blood
And al her membres for to spill
Onely to fulfill her will
Thei maken it hole in many wise
And hoten hem her ful seruice
How sore that it do hem smerte
Into her very naked herte
Herte and also hole thei yeue
For the time that thei may liue
So that with her flaterie
Thei maken fooles glorifie
Of her wordes speking
And han chere of a reioysing
And trow hem as the Euangile
And it is al falshede and gile
As thei shal afterwarde se
whan thei arne fal in pouerte
And ben of good and catel bare
Than should thei sene who frendes ware
For of an hundred certainly
Nor of a thousande ful scarsly
Ne shall thei finde vnnethes one
whan pouerte is comen vpon
For thus Fortune that I of tell
With men whan her lust to dwell
Maketh hem to lese her conisaunce
And norisheth hem in ignoraunce.

But frowarde Fortune and peruerse
whan high estates she doth reuerse
And maketh hem to toumble doune
Of her whele with sodaine tourne
And from her richesse dothe hem flie
And plongeth hem in pouerte
As a stepmother enuious
And laieth a plaister dolorous
Unto her hertes wounded egre
whiche is not tempered with vinegre
But with pouerte and indigence
For to shewe by experience
That she is Fortune verelie
In whom no man should affie
Nor in her yeftes haue fiaunce
She is so ful of variaunce
Thus can she maken hie and lowe
whan thei from richesse arne throwe
Fully to knowen without were
Frende of affecte, and frende of chere
And whiche in loue weren trew and stable
And whiche also weren variable
After Fortune her goddesse

In pouerte, either in richesse
For all that yeueth here out of drede
Unhappe beareth it in dede
For in fortune lette not one
Of frendes, whan fortune is gone
I meane tho frendes that woll flie
Inone as entreth pouerte
And yet thei wol not leaue hem so
But in eche place where thei go
Thei call hem wretche, scorne, and blame
And of her mishappe hem diffame
And namely suche as in richesse
Pretendeth moste of stablenesse
Whan that they sawe him set on lofte
And weren of hem sucoured ofte
And moste iholpe in all her nede
But now thei take no maner hede
But seine in voice of flaterie
That now appereth her folie
Ouer al wher so thei fare
And singe, go farewel felde fare
Al suche frendes I beshrewe
For of trewe there be to fewe
But sothfast frendes, what so betide
In euery fortune wollen abide
Thei han her hertes in suche noblesse
That thei nil loue for no richesse
Nor for that fortune may hem sende
Thei wollen hem socour and defende
And chaunge for lofte ne for lore
For who his frende loueth euermore
Though men drawe swerde his to slo
He may not hewe her loue a two
But in case that I shall say
For pride and ire lese it he may
And for reproue by nicete
And discouering of priuite
With tonge wounding, as felon
Through venemous detraccion
Frende in this case wol gon his way
For nothing greue him more ne may
And for nought els wol he flie
If that he loue in stabilite
And certaine he is well begone
Among a thousande that findeth one
For there may be no richesse
Ypenst frendship of worthinesse
For it ne may so high attaine
As may the valoure, sothe to saine
Of him that loueth trewe and well
Frendship is more than is catell
For frende in courte aie better is
Than peny in purse certis
And fortune mishaping
Whan vpon men she is fabling
Through misturning of her chaunce
And cast hem out of balaunce
She maketh through her aduersite
Men ful clerely for to se
Him that is frende in existence
From him that is by apparence
For in fortune maketh anone
To know thy frendes fro thy fone
By experience right as it is
The whiche is more to praise iwis
Than in muche richesse and tresour
For more depe profite and valour
Pouertie, and suche aduersite
Before, than doeth prosperite
For that one yeueth conisaunce
And the tother ignorraunce.
And thus in pouerte is in dede
Trouthe declared fro falshede
For faint frendes it wol declare
And trewe also, what way thei fare
For whan he was in his richesse
These frendes ful of doublenesse
Offred him in many wise
Herte and body, and seruice
What would he thē haue you to haue bought
To knowen openly her thought
That he now hath so clerely sene
The lasse begiled he should haue bene
And he had than perceiued it
But Richesse nolde not let him wit
Wel more auauntage doeth him than
Sithe that it maketh him a wise man
The great mischefe that he perceiueth
Than doeth Richesse that him deceiueth
Richesse riche ne maketh nought
Him that on treasour sette his thought
For richesse stonte in sufficiaunce
And nothing in haboundaunce
For sufficiaunce all onely
Maketh menne to liue richely.

For he that hath mitches tweine
Ne value in his demeine
Liueth more at ease, and more is riche
Than doeth he that is chiche
And in his barne hath soth to saine
An hundred mauis of whete graine
Though he be chapman or marchaunt
And haue of Golde many besaunt
For in the getting he hath suche wo
And in the keping drede also
And lette euer more his besinesse
For to encrease, and nat to lesse
For to augment and multiply
And though on heapes that lie him by

Yet

yet neuer shall make his richesse
Itleth vnto his gredinesse
But the poore that retcheth nought
Saue of his liuelode in his thought
Whiche that he getteth with his trauaile
He dredeth nought that it shall faile
Though he haue little worldes good
Meate and drinke, and easie food
Upon his trauaile and liuing
And also sufficiaunt clothing
Or if in sickenesse that he fall
And lothe meate and drinke withall
Though he haue not his meate to buie
He shall bethinke him hastely
To put him out of all daungere
That he of meate hath no mistere
Or that he maie with little eke
Be founden, while that he is seke
Or that men shull him berne in haste
To liue till his sickenesse be paste
To some Maisonde we beside
He caste nought what shall him betide
He thinketh nought that euer he shall
Into any sickenesse fall.

And though it fall, as it maie be
That all be time spare shall he
As mokell as shall to him suffice
While he is sicke in any wise
He doeth for that he woll be
Content with his pouerte
Without nede of any man
So mocche in little haue he can
He is a paide with his fortune
And for he will be importune
Unto no wight, ne onerous
Nor of her goodesse couetous
Therefore he spareth, it maie well been
His poore estate for to susteen.

Or if him lacke not for to spare
But suffreth forthe, as nat ye ware
It lacke it happeneth, as it maie
Right vnto his lacke daie
And take the worlde as it would be
For euer in harte thinketh he
The soner that death him slo
To Paradise the soner go
He shall, there for to liue in blisse
Where that he shall no good misse
Thider he hopeth God shall him sende
After this wretched liues ende
Pythagoras himself reherses
In a booke that the gold verses
Is cleped, for the nobilite
Of the honorable dite.
Than whan thou goest thy body fro
Free in the heire thou shalt vp go
And leauen all humanite
And purely liue in diete
He is a foole withouten were
That troweth haue his countrey here
In yearth is not our countre
That maie these clerkes seine and se
In Boece of consolacion
Where it is maked mencion
Of our contre plaine at the ye
By teaching of Philosophie
Where leude men might lere wit
Who so that would translaten it
If he be suche that can well liue
After his rent, maie him yeue
And not desireth more to haue
Than maie fro pouerte him saue
A wiseman saied, as we maie seen
Is no man wretched, but he it ween
Be he king, knight, or ribaude
And many a ribaude is merie and baude
That swinketh, and bereth both daie & night
Many a burthen of greate might
The whiche doeth him lasse offence
For he suffreth in pacience
Thei laugh and daunce, trippe and sing
And laie nought vp for her liuing
But in the Tauerne all dispendeth
The winning that God hem sendeth
Than goeth he fardels for to beare
With as good chere as he did care
To swinke and trauaile he not faineth
For to robben he disdaineth
But right anon, after his swinke
He goeth to Tauerne for to drinke
All these are riche in haboundaunce
That can thus haue sufficiaunce
Well more than can an vserere
As God well knoweth, without were
For an vsurere, so God me se
Shall neuer for richesse riche be
But euer more poore and indigent
Scarce and gredy in his entent.

For sothe it is, whom it displease
There maie no marchaunt liue at ease
His harte in sothe a where is set
That it quicke brenneth to get
Ne neuer shall, though he hath getten
Though he haue golde in garners yetten
For to be nedy he dredeth sore
Wherefore to getten more and more
He set his harte and his delire

So wote he brenneth in the fire
Of couetise that maketh him wood
To purchace other mennes good
He vnderfongeth a greate pain
That vndertaketh to drinke vp Sain
For the more he drinketh aie
The more he leaueth, the sothe to saie
Thus is thrust of false getting
That laste euer in coueting
And the anguishe and distresse
With the fire of gredinesse
She fighteth with him aie, and striueth
That his harte a sonder riueth
Soche gredinesse him assaileth
That whan he moste hath, moste he faileth
Physiciens, and Aduocates
Gone right by thesame yates
Thei sell her science for winning
And haunte her crafte for greate getting
Her winning is of soche swetenesse
That if a man fall in sickenesse
Thei are full glad, for her encrease
For by her will, without lease
Euerichе man should be seke
And though thei die, thei set nat a Leke
After whan thei the golde haue take
Full little care for hem thei make
Thei would that forwerie were sicke at ones
Ye twoo hundred, in flesche and bones
And yet twoo thousande, as I gesse
For to encreasen her richesse
Thei woll not worchen in no wise
But for lucre and couetise
For Physicke ginneth first by (phi)
The Physicien all. sothly
And sithen it goeth fro fie to fie
To trust on hem it is folie
For thei nill in no maner gre
Doe right nought for charite
Eke in thesame secte are set
All tho that preachen for to get
Worships, honour, and richesse
Her hartes arne in greate distresse
That folke liue not holily
But abouen all specially
Soche as preachen veinglorie
And towarde God haue no memorie
But forthe as Ipocrites trace
And to her soules death purchace
And outward shewing holinesse
Though thei be full of cursednesse
Nat liche to the Apostles twelue
Thei deceiue other and hem selue
Begiled is the giler than
For preaching of a cursed man
Though to other maie profite
Himselfe it auaileth not a mite
For oft good predicacioun
Cometh of euill entencioun
To him nat daileth his preaching
All helpe he other with his teaching
For where thei good example take
There is he with veinglorie shake
But let vs leuen these preachours
And speake of hem that in her tours
Heape vp her golde, and fast shet
And sore thereon their harte set
Thei neither loue God ne drede
Thei kepe more than it is nede
And in her bagges sore it binde
Out of the Sunne, and of the winde
Thei put vp more than nede ware
Whan thei seen poore folke forfare
For hungre die, and for colde quake
God can well vengeaunce thereof take
The greate mischiues hem assaileth
And thus in gadring aie trauaileth
With muche pain thei winne richesse
And drede hem holdeth in distresse
To kepe that thei gather fast
With sorowe thei leaue it at the last
With sorowe thei bothe die and liue
That vnto richesse her hartes yeue
And in defaute of loue it is
As it sheweth full well iwis
For if these gredy, the sothe to saine
Loueden, and were loued againe
And good loue reigned ouer all
Soche wickednesse ne should fall
But he should yeue, that moste good had
To hem that weren in nede bestad
And liue without false vsure
For charite, full cleane and pure
If thei hem yeue to goodnesse
Defending hem from idelnesse
In all this worlde than poore none
We should finde I trowe not one
But chaunged is this worlde vnstable
For loue is ouer all vendable
Wele that no man loueth now
But for winning and for prowe
And loue is thralled in seruage
Whan it is solde for auauntage
yet women woll her bodies sell
Soche soules goeth to the deuill of hell.

Whan Loue had tolde hem his entent
The baronage to counsaile went
In many sentences thei fill
And diuerslly thei saied her will

But

But after discorde thei accorded
And her accorde to Loue recorded
Sir saiden thei, we ben at one
By euen accorde of euerichone
Out take richesse all onely
That sworne hath full hauteinly
That she the castell nill not assaile
Ne smite a stroke in this battaile
With darte ne mace, speare, ne knife
For man that speaketh, or beareth the life
And blameth your empryse iwis
And from our hoste departed is
At least waie, as in this plite
So hath she this man in dispite
For she saieth he ne loued her neuer
And therefore she woll hate him euer
For he woll gather no treasore
He hath her wrathe for euermore
He agilte her neuer in other caas
Lo here all holly his trespas
She saieth well, that this other daie
He asked her leaue to gone the waie
That is cleped to moche yeuing
And spake full faire in his praying
But whan he praied her, poore was he
Therefore she warned him the entre
Ne yet is he not thriuen so
That he hath getten a penie or two
That quietly is his owne in holde
Thus hath Richesse vs all tolde
And whan Richesse vs this recorded
Withouten her we been accorded

And we finde in our accordaunce
That false Semblant and Abstinaunce
With all the folke of her battaile
Shull at the hinder gate assaile
That wicked tong hath in keping
With his Normans full of iangling
And with hem Curtesie and Largesse
That shull shewe her hardinesse
To the old wife that kept so hard
Faire welcoming within her ward
Than shall Delite and well Heling
Fonde, Shame adoune to bring
With all her hoste early and late
Thei shull assailen that ilke gate
Against Drede shall Hardinesse
Assatle, and also Sikernesse
With all the folke of her leading
That neuer wiste what was playng.

Y Raunchise shall fight and eke Pite
With Daunger full of cruelte
This is your hoste ordained weale
Doune shall the Castell euery deale
If eueriche doe his entent
So that Genius be present
Your mother full of besselage
That can inough of sothe vsage
Withouten her maie no wight spede
This werke, neither for worde ne dede
Therefore is good ye for her sende
For through her maie this worke amende.

LOrdinges my mother the Goddes
That is my Ladie, and my maistres
Nis nat all at my willing:
Ne doeth nat all my desiring.
Yet can she sometime doen labour
Whan that her lusteth in my socour
As my nede is for to atcheue
But now I thinke her nat to greue
My mother is she, and of childhede
I bothe worship her, and eke drede
For who that dredeth sire ne dame
Shall it abie in bodie or name
And natheless, yet conne we
Sende after her if nede be
And were she nigh she commen would
I trowe that nothing might her hold.

My mother is of greate prowesse
She hath tane many a forteresse
That cost hath many a pound er this
There I nas not present iwis
And yet men saied it was my deede
But I come neuer in that stede
Ne me ne liketh so mote I thee
That soche tours been take with me
For why? Me thinketh that in no wise
It maie be cleped but marchaundise.

GO buie a courser blacke or white
And paie therefore, than art thou quite
The Marchaunt oweth thee right nought
Ne thou him whan thou it bought
I woll not selling clepe yeuing
For selling asketh no guerdoning
Here lithe no thanke, ne no merite
That one goth from that other all quite
But this selling is not semblable
For whan his horse is in the stable
He maie it sell again parde
And winnen on it, soche happe maie be
All maie the manne nat lese iwis
For at the least the skinne is his
Or els, if it so betide
That he woll kepe his horse to ride
Yet is he Lorde aie of his horse

But thilke chaffare is well worse
There Venus entremeteth ought
For who so loche chaffare hath bought
He shall not worchen so wisely
That he ne shall lese all utterly
Both his money, and his chaffare
But the seller of the ware
The prise and profite haue shall
Certaine the buier shall lese all
For he ne can so deare it buie
To haue Lordship, and full maistrie
Ne haue power to make letting
Neither for yefte ne for preaching
That of his chaffare maugre his
An other shall haue as moche i wis
If he woll yeue as moche as he
Of what countrey so that he be
Or for right nought so happe maie
If he can flatter her to her paie
Been than loche marchauntes wise?
No, but fooles in euery wise
Whan thei buie loche thing wilfully
There as thei lese her good folily
But natheless, this dare I saie
My mother is not wont to paie
For she is neither so foole ne nice
To entremete her of loche vice
But trust well, he shall paie all
That repent of his bargaine shall
Whan pouerte put him in distresse
All were he scholer to Richesse
That is for me in greate yerning
Whan he assenteth to my willing.

But my mother sainct Venus
And by her father Saturnus
That her engendred by his life
But nat vpon his wedded wife
Yet woll I more vnto you swere
To make this thing the surere.
Now by that faithe, and that beaute
That I owe to all my brethren free
Of whiche there nis wight vnder heuin
That can her fathers names neuin
So diuers and so many there be
That with my mother haue be priue
Yet woll I sweare for likernesse
The Pole of helle to my witnesse
Now drinke I not this yere clarre
If that I lie, or forswore be
For of the Goddes the vsage is
That who so him forsweareth amis
Shall that yere drinke no clarre
Now haue I swore inough parde
If I forswear me than am I lorne
But I woll neuer be forsworne
Sithe Richesse hath me sailed here
She shall abie that trespas full dere
At least waie but her harme
With swearde, or sparth, or gisarme
For certes sithe she loueth not me
Fro thilke time that she maie se
The castell and the toure to shake
In sorie time she shall awake
If I maie gripe a riche man
I shall so pulle him, if I can
That he shall in a fewe stoundes
Lese all his markes, and his poundes
I shall him make his pens out fling
But thei in his garner spring
Our maidens shall eke plucke him so
That him shall neden fethers mo
And make him sell his londe to spende
But he the bet conne him defende.

More men han made her Lorde of me
Although thei nat so mightie be
That thei maie fede me in delite
I woll not haue hem in dispite
No good man hateth hem, as I gesse
For chinche and seloun is Richesse
That so can chase hem and dispise
And hem defoule in sondrie wise
Thei louen full bette, so God me spede
Than doeth the riche chinchy grede
And been (in good faithe) more stable
And truer, and more seruiable
And therefore it suffiseth me
Her good harte, and her beaute
Thei han on me set all her thought
And therefore I foryete hem nought
I woll hem bring in greate noblesse
If that I were God of Richesse
As I am God of Loue sothely
Soche ruthe vpon her plaint haue I.
Therefore I must his succour be
That paineth him to seruen me
For if he deied for loue of this
Than semeth in me no loue there is.

Sir saied thei, sothe is euery dele
That ye reherce, and we wote wele
Thilke othe to holde is reasonable
For it is good and couenable
That ye on riche men han swore
For sir, this wote we well before
If riche men doen you homage
That is a foule doen outrage
But ye shull not forswore be
Ne let therefore to drinke clarrie

Oꝛpiment maked freshe and newe
Ladies shull hem soche pepir bꝛewe
If that thei fall into her laas
That thei foꝛ wo mowe saine alas
Ladies shullen euer so curteis be
That thei shall quite your othe all fre
Ne seketh neuer other vicaire
Foꝛ thei shall speake with him so faire
That ye shall holde you paied full wele
Though ye you medle neuer a deale
Let Ladies woꝛche with her thinges
Thei shall hem tell so fele tidinges
And moue hem eke so many requestes
By flatterie, that not honest is
And thereto yeue hem soche thankinges
what with kissing, and with talkinges
That certes if thei trowed be
Shall neuer leaue hem londe ne see
That it nill as the moeble fare
Of whiche thei first deliuered are
Now maie you tell vs all your will
And we your hestes shall fulfill.

But false Semblant dare not foꝛ dꝛede
Of you sir, medle him of this deede
Foꝛ he saieth, that ye been is so
He not, if ye woll woꝛche him wo
Wherefoꝛe we pꝛaie you all beausire
That ye foꝛyeue him nowe your ire
And that he maie dwell as your man
With Abstinence his deare lemman.
This our accoꝛde and our will now
Parfei saied Loue, I graunt it you
I woll well holde him foꝛ my man
Now let him come, and he foꝛthe ran
False Semblant (q Loue) in this wise
I take thee here to my seruice
That thou our frendes helpe alwaie
And hindꝛeth hem neither night ne daie
But doe thy might hem to releue
And eke our enemies that thou greue
Thine be this might, I graunt it thee
My king of harlotes shalt thou bee
We woll that thou haue soche honour
Certain thou art a false traitour
And eke a thief, sithe thou were boꝛne
A thousande times thou art foꝛswoꝛne
But natheless in our hearing
To put our folke out of doubting
I bidde thee teache hem, wost thou how?
By some generall signe now
In what place thou shalt fou[illegible] be
If that men had mister of thee
And how men shall thee best espie
Foꝛ thee to knowe is greate maistrie
Tell in what place is thine haunting
Sir I haue full diuers wonning
That I kepe not rehearsed be
So that ye would respiten me
Foꝛ if that I tell you the sothe
I maie haue harme and shame bothe
If that my felowes wisten it
My tales shoulden me be quit
Foꝛ certaine thei would hate me
If euer I knewe her cruelte
Foꝛ thei would ouer all holde hem still
Of trothe, that is again her will
Soche tales kepen thei not here
I might ettsone buie it full dere
If I saied of hem any thing
That ought displeaseth to her hearing
Foꝛ what woꝛde that hem pricketh oꝛ biteth
In that woꝛde none of hem deliteth
All were it Gospell the Euangile
That would repꝛoue hem of her gile
Foꝛ thei are cruell and hautain
And this thing wote I well certain
If I speake ought to paire oꝛ loos
Your courte shall not so well be cloos
That thei ne shall wite it at last
Of good men am I nought agast
Foꝛ thei woll taken on hem nothing
whan that thei knowe all my meaning
But he that woll it on him take
He woll himself suspecious make
That he is life let couertly
In gile and in ypocrisie
That me engendꝛed and yaue foꝛth ring
Thei made a full good engendꝛing
(q Loue) foꝛ who so sothly tell
Thei engendꝛed the diuell of hell.

But nedely, how so euer it be
(q Loue) I will and charge thee
To tell anon thy wonning places
Hearing eche wight that in this place is
And what life thou liuest also
Hide it no lenger now, whereto?
Thou must discouer all thy woꝛching
How thou seruest, and of what thing
Though that thou shouldest foꝛ thy soth saw
Been alto beaten and to dꝛawe
And yet art thou not wont parde
But natheless, though thou beaten be
Thou shalt not be the first that so
Hath foꝛ sothsawe suffred wo.

Sir, sithe that it maie liken you
Though that I should be slain right now
I shall doen your commaundement

Foꝛ

For thereto haue I greate talent.

Withouten wordes mo, right than
False Semblant his sermon began
And saied hem thus in audience
Barons, take hede of my sentence
That wight that list to haue knowing
Of false Semblant, full of flattering
He must in worldly folke him seke
And certes in the Cloisters eke
I won no where, but in hem twaie
But not like euen, sothe to saie
Shortly I woll herberowe me
There I hope best to hulstred be
And certainly, siberest hiding
Is vnderneth humblest clothing
Religious folke been full couert
Seculer folke been more appert
But natheless, I woll not blame
Religious folke, ne hem diffame
In what habite that euer thei go
Religion humble, and true also
Woll I not blame, ne dispise
But I nill loue it in no wise
I meane of false religious
That stout been, and malicious
That wollen in an habite go
And setten not her harte therto.

Religious folke been all pitous
Thou shalt not seen one dispitous
Thei louen no pride, ne no strife
But humbly thei woll lede her life
With whiche folke woll I neuer be
And if I dwell, I faine me
I maie well in her habite go
But me were leuer my necke a two
Than let a purpose that I take
What couenaunt that euer I make
I dwell with hem that proude be
And full of wiles and subtelte
That worship of this worlde coueiten
And greate nede connen exploiten
And gon and gadren greate pitaunces
And purchase hem the acqueintaunces
Of men that mightie life maie leden
And faine hem poore, and hem self feden
With good morcels delicious
And drinken good wine precious
And preache vs pouert and distresse
And stilchen hem self greate richesse
With wily nettes, that thei cast
It woll come foule out at the last
Thei been fro cleane religion went
Thei make the worlde an argument
That hath a foule conclusion
I haue a robe of religion
Than am I all religious
This argument is all roignous
It is not worthe a croked Brere
Habite ne maketh neither Monke ne frere
But cleane life and deuocion
Maketh good men of religion
Natheless, there can none answere
How high that euer his hedde he bere
With rasour whetted neuer so kene
That gile in braunches cutte thurtene
There can no wight distinct it so
That he dare saie a worde therto.
But what herberowe that euer I take
Or what semblaunt that euer I make
I meane but gile, and folowe that
For right no more than Gibbe our cat
(That awaiteth Mice and Rattes to killen)
Ne entende I but to begilen
Ne no wight maie, by my clothing
Wete with what folke is my dwelling
Ne by my wordes yet parde
So soft and so pleasaunt thei be
Beholde the deedes that I doe
But thou be blinde thou oughtest so
For varie her wordes fro her deede
Thei thinke on gile without drede
What maner clothing that thei were
Or what estate that euer thei bere
Lered or leude, Lorde or Ladie
Knight, Squier, Burgeis, or Bailie.

Right thus while false Sēblāt sermoneth
Eft sones Loue him aresoneth
And brake his tale in his speaking
As though he had him tolde lealing
And saied: what deuill is that I heare
What folke hast thou vs nempned here
Maie men finde religioun
In worldly habitacioun
Ye sir, it foloweth nat that thei
Should leade a wicked life parfei
Ne not therefore her soules lese
That hem to worldly clothes chese
For certes it were greate pite
Men maie in seculer clothes se
Florishen holy religioun
Full many a sainct in felde and toun
With many a virgine glorious
Deuoute, and full religious
Han died, that commen clothe aie beren
Yet sainctes neuertheless thei weren
I could recken you many a ten
Ye welnigh all these holy women

That

That men in churches herry and seke
Bothe maidens, and these wiues eke
That baren ful many a faire childe here
Weared alway clothes seculere
And in the same diden they
That saintes weren, and ben alway.
The. ix. thousande maidens dere
That beren in heuen her cierges clere
Of whiche men rede in churche and sing
Were take in seculer clothing
Whan thei receiued martirdome
And wonnen heuen vnto her home
Good hert maketh the good thought
The clothing yeueth ne reueth nought
The good thought and the worching
That maketh the religion flouring
There lieth the good religioun
After the righte entencioun.

Who so toke a wethers skinne
And wrapped a gredy woulfe therinne
For he should go with lambes white
Weneth thou not he would hem bite
Yes: Neuertheless, as he were wood
He would hem wirry, and drinke the blood
And wel the rather hem disceiue
For lithe thei coude nat perceiue
His tregette, and his cruelte
Thei would him folow al tho he flie.

If there be wolues of suche hewe
Amonges these Apostles newe
Thou holy churche ỹ maiste be wailed
Sithe that thy cite is assailed
Through knightes of thine owne table
God wot thy lordship is doutable
If thei enforce it to win
That should defende it fro within
Who might defence ayenst hem make
Without stroke it mote be take
Of trepeget or mangonell
Without displaiyng of pensell
And if God nil done it socour
But let renne in this colour
Thou must thy heestes letten be
Than is there nought, but yelde the
Or yeue him tribute doutles
And holde it of hem to haue pees
But greater harme betide the
That thei all maister of it be
Wel con thei scorne the withall
By day stuffen thei the wall
And al the night thei minen there
Nay, thou planten muste els where
Thine impes, if thou wolt frute haue
Abide not there thy selfe to saue.

But now peace, here I turne againe
I wol no more of this thing saine
Yf I may passen me hereby
I might maken you wery
But I wol heten you alway
To helpe your frendes what I may
So thei wollen my company
For thei be shent al vtterly
But if so fal, that I be
Ofte with hem, and thei with me
And eke my lemman mote thei serue
Or thei shul not my loue deserue
Forsoth I am a false traitour
God iudged me for a theke trechour
Forswore I am, but wel nigh none
Wote of my gile, til it be done.

Through me hath many one deth receiued
That my treget neuer aperceiued
And yet receiueth, and shal receiue
That my falsnesse shal neuer aperceiue
But who so doth, if he wise be
Him is right good beware of me
But so slighe is the aperceiuing
That al to late cometh knowing
For Protheus that coude him chaunge
In euery shappe, homely and straunge
Coude neuer suche gile ne treasoune
As I, for I come neuer in toune
There as I might knowen be
Though men me both might here
Ful wel I can my clothes chaunge
Take one, and make an other straunge
Now am I knight, now Chastelaine
Now Prelate, and now Chaplaine
Now Priest, now Clerke, now Foskere
Now am I maister, now Scholere
Now Monke, now Chanon, now Baily
What euer mister manne am I
Now am I Prince, now am I Page
And can by hart euery langage
Somtime am I hoore and olde
Now am I yong, stoute, and bolde
Now am I Robert, now Robin
Now Frere Minor, now Jacobin
And with me foloweth my loteby
To done me solace and company
That hight dame Abstinence, and raigned
In many a queint arraie fained
Right as it commeth to her liking
I fulfill all her desiring
Somtime a womans cloth take I
Now am I a Maide, now Lady

Somtime I am religious
Now like an Anker in an hous
Semtime am I priorelle
And now a Nonne, and now Abbelle
And go through al religiouns
Seking all religiouns
But to what order that I am sworne
I take the strawe and beate the corne
To iolie folke I enhabite
I aske no more but her habite
What wol ye more in euery wise
Right as me list I me disgise:
Wel can I beare me vnder wede
Vnlike is my worde to my dede
Thus make I into my trappes fall
The people, through my priuileges all
That ben in christendome a liue
I may assoile, and I maie shriue
That no Prelate may let me
All folke, where euer thei founde be
I not no Prelate maie done so
But it the Pope be, and no mo
That made thilke establishing
Now is not this a proper thing:
But were my sleightes aperceiued
As I was wont, and wost thou why:
For I did hem a tregetry
But therof yeue I a litel tale
I haue the siluer and the male
So haue I preched and eke shriuen
So haue I take, so haue I yeuen
Through her foly, husbonde and wife
That I lede right a ioly life
Through simplesse of the Prelacie
Thei knowe not all my tregettrie.

But for as moche as man and wife
Shuld shew her parish Priest her life
Ones a yere, as saith the Bokе
Er any wight his housel toke
Than haue I priuileges large
That maie of muche thing discharge
For he may say right thus parde
Sir priest, in shrifte I tel it the
That he to whom that I am shriuen
Hath me assoiled, and me yeuen
Penaunce sothly for my sin
Whiche that I founde me giltie in
Ne I ne haue neuer entencion
To make double confession
Ne reherce efte my shrift to the
O shrifte is right inough to me
This ought the suffise wele
Ne be not rebell neuer a dele
For certes, though thou haddest it sworne
I wote no Priest ne Prelate borne
That maie to shrift eft me constraine
And if thei done I wol me plaine
For I wote where to plaine wele
Thou shalt not streine me a dele
Ne enforce me, ne not me trouble
To make my confession double
Ne I haue none affection
To haue double absolucion
The first is right inough to me
This latter assoiling quite I the
I am vnbounde, what maist thou finde
More of my sinnes me to vnbinde
For he that might hath in his honde
Of all my sinnes me vnbonde
And if thou wolt me thus constraine
That me mote nedes on the plaine
There shall no iuge imperiall
Ne bisshop, ne officiall
Done iugement on me, for I
Shal gone and plaine me openly
Vnto my shriftfather newe
That hight Frere wolfe vntrewe
And he shal chuse him for me
For I trowe he can hamper the
But lord he would be wrothe withall
Yf men would him Frere wolfe call
For he would haue no pacience
But done all cruell vengience
He would his might done at the leest
Nothing spare for goddes heest
And God so wise be my socour
But thou yeue me my sauiour
At Eester, whan it liketh me
Without preasing more on the
I wol forth, and to him gone
And he shal housel me anone
For I am out of thy grutching
I kepe not deale with the nothing
Thus may he shriue him, that forsaketh
His parish priest, and to me taketh
And if the priest wol him refuse
I am full redy him to accuse
And him punish and hamper so
That he his churche shal for go

But who so hath in his feling
The consequence of suche shriuing
Shal sene, that priest may neuer haue might
To know the conscience a right
Of him, that is vnder his cure
And this is ayenst holy scripture
That biddeth euery herde honest
Haue bery knowing of his beest
But yore folke that gon by strete

That

That haue no golde, ne summes grete
Hem would I let to her Prelates
Or let her Priestes know her states
For to me right nought yeue thei
And why it is, for thei ne may
Thei ben so bare, I take no kepe
But I woll haue the fat shepe
Let parish Priestes haue the lene
I yeue not of her harme a bene
And if that Prelates grutche it
That oughten woth be in her wit
To lese her fat beestes so
I shall yeue hem a stroke or two
That thei shal lesen with force
Ye, both her Mitre and her Croce
Thus iape I hem, and haue do longe
My priuileges ben so stronge.

Falle Semblant would haue stinted here
But Loue ne made him no suche chere
That he was wery of his sawe
But for to make him glad and fawe
He said, tel on more specially
How that thou seruest vntruly
Tel forth, and shame the neuer a dele
For as thine habit sheweth wele
Thou seruest an holy Heremite
Sothe is, but I am but an ipocrite
Thou goest and prechest pouerte:
Ye sir, but richesse hath poste
Thou prechest abstinence also:
Sir, I wol stillen so mote I go
My paunche, of good meate and wine
As should a maister of diuine
For how that I me poore faine
Yet al pore folke I disdaine.

I Loue better the acqueintaunce
Ten times of the king of fraunce
Than of a pore man of milde mode
Though that his soule be also good
For whan I se beggers quaking
Naked on mixins all stinking
For hungre crie, and eke for care
I entremet not of her fare
Thei ben so poore, and ful of pine
Thei might not ones yeue me a dine
For thei haue nothing but her life
What should he yeue that licheth his knife:
It is but foly to entremete
To seke in houndes nest fat mete
Let beare him to the spittle anone
But for me, comfort get thei none
But a riche licke blurere
Would I visite and drawe nere
Him would I comforte and rehete
For I hope of his golde to gete
And if that wicked death him haue
I woll go with him in his graue
And if there any repreue me
Why that I let the pore be
Wost thou how I not escape
I say and swere him full rape
That riche men han more tetches
Of sinne, than han pore wretches
And han of counsaile more mister
And therfore I would drawe hem ner
But as great hurt, it maie so be
Hath a soule in right great pouerte
As soule in great richesse forsothe
Al be it that thei hurten bothe
For richesse and mendicitees
Bene cleped two extremitees
The meane is cleped Sufficiaunce
The there lieth of vertue the abundaunce
For Salomon full wel I wote
In his Parables vs wrote
As it is knowen of many a wight
In his thirtene chapiter right
God thou me kepe for thy poste
Fro richesse and mendicite
For if a riche man him dresse
To thinke to moche on richesse
His hert on that so ferre is sette
That he his creatour doth forgette
And him that beggeth wol aie greue
How should I by his worde him leue
Unneth that he nis a micher
For I worne, or els goddes lier
Thus saith Salomon sawes
Ne we finde written in no lawes
And namely in our christen laie
Who saith ye, I dare say naie
That Christ, ne his Apostels dete
While that thei walked in earth here
Were neuer seen herbred begging
For they nolden beggen for nothing
And right thus were men wont to teche
And in this wise would it preche
The maisters of diuinite
Somtime in Paris the cite.

And if men would there gaine appose
The naked texte and let the glose
It might soone assoiled be
For men may wel the sothe se
That pardie thei might alke a thing
Plainly forth without begging
For they weren goddes heerdes dere
And cure of soules hadden here

Thei nolde nothing begge her foode
For after Christ was done on roode
With their proper hondes thei wrought
And with traueile, and els nought
Thei wonnen al her sustenaunce
And liueden forth in her penaunce
And the remenaunt paf awaie
To other poore folkes alwaie
Thei neither bilden toure ne halle
But thei in houses smal with alle
A mighty man that can and maie
Should with his honde and body alwaie
Winne him his foode in labouring
Yf he ne haue rent or suche a thing
Although he be religious
And God to seruen curious
Thus mote he done, or do trespas
But if it be in certaine caas
That I can reherce, if mister be
Right wel, whan the time I se.

Seke the boke of sainte Augustine
Be it in paper or perchemene
There as he writte of these worchinges
Thou shalt sene that none excusinges
A perfite man ne should seke
By wordes, ne by dedes eke
Although he be religious
And God to seruen curious
That he ne shal, so mote I go
With proper hondes, and body also
Get his foode in labouring
Yf he ne haue proprete of thing
Yet should he sel all his substaunce
And with his swinke haue sustenaunce
If he be parfite in bounte
Thus han the bokes tolde me
For he that wol gone idelly
And bseth it aie besily
To haunten other mennes table
He is a trechour ful of fable
Ne he ne maie by good reason
Excuse him by his orison
For men behoueth in some gise
Ben somtime in goddes seruise
To gone and purchasen her nede
Men mote eaten, that is no drede
And slepe, and eke do other thing
So long may thei leaue praying
So may they eke her praier blinne
While that thei werke her meate to winne
Seint Austin wol therto accorde
In thilke boke that I recorde
Justinian eke, that made lawes
Hath thus forboden by olde sawes.

No man, vp paine to be deed
Mighty of body, to begge his breed
Yf he may swinke it for to gete
Men should him rather maime or bete
Or done of him aperte iustice
Than sustren him in suche malice
Thei done not wel so mote I go
That taken suche almesse so
But if thei haue some priuilege
That of the paine hem woll alege
But how that is, can I not se
But if the prince disceiued be
Ne I ne wene not sikerly
That thei maie haue it rightfully
But I wol not determine
Of princes power, ne define
Ne by my worde comprehende iwis
Yf it so ferre may stretche in this
I wol not entremete a dele
But I trowe that the boke saith wele
Who that taketh almesses, that be
Dewe to folke that men may se
Lame, feble, wery, and bare
Poore, or in suche maner care
That con winne hem neuer mo
For thei haue no power therto
He eateth his owne dampning
But if he lie, that made al thing
And if ye suche a truaunt finde
Chastise him wel, if ye be kinde
But thei would hate you parcaas
If ye killen in her laas
Thei would eftsones do you scathe
If that thei might, late or rathe
For thei be not ful pacient
That han the world thus foule blent
And weteth wel, that God bad
The good man sell al that he had
And folowe him, and to poore it yeue
He would not therfore that he liue
To seruen him in mendience
For it was neuer his sentence
But he bad werken, when that nede is
And folowe him in good dedes
Saint Poule that loued al holy church
He bade the Apostels for to wurch
And winnen her liuelode in that wise
And hem defended truandise
And said, werketh with your honden
Thus should the thing be vnderstonden
He nolde iwis haue bid hem begging
Ne sellen gospell, ne preching
Lest thei berafte, with her asking
Folke of her catel or of her thing
For in this world is many a man

That

That yeueth his good, for he ne can
Werne it for shame, or els he
Would of the asker deliuered be
And for he him encombreth so
He yeueth him good to let him go
But it can him nothing profite
Thei lese the yeft and the merite
The good folke that Poule to preched
Profred him ofte, whan he hem teched
Some of her good in charite
But therof right nothing toke he
But of his honde would he gette
Clothes to wrine him and his mete.

TEl me than how a man may liuen
That al his good to pore hath yeuen
And wol but onely bidde his bedes
And neuer with hondes labour his nedes
May he do so: Ye sir: And howe:
Sir: I woll gladly tel you
Saint Austen saith, a man may be
In houses that han properte
As templers, and hospitelers
And as these Chanons regulers
Or white Monkes, or these blacke
I wol no mo ensamples make
And take the thereof his susteining
For therin lithe no begging
But otherwaies not iwis
Yet Austen gabbeth not of this
And yet ful many a Monke laboureth
That God in holy Churche honoureth
For whan her swinking is agon
Thei rede and sing in Church anone

And for there hath ben great discorde
As many a wight may beare recorde
Upon the estate of mendicience
I wol shortely in your presence
Tel how a man maie begge at nede
That hath not wherwith him to fede
Maugre his felowes ianglinges
For sothfastnes wol none hidinges
And yet percase I may obey
That I to you sothly thus sey.

SO here the case especiall
If a man be so bestiall
That he of no crafte hath science
And nought desireth ignorence
Than may he go a begging yerne
Till he some other crafte can lerne
Through whiche without truanding
He may in trouthe haue his liuing
Or if he may done no labour
For elde, or sicknesse, or langour
Or for his tender age also
Than may he yet a begging go
Or if he haue perauenture
Through vsage of his noriture
Liued ouer deliciously
Than oughten good folke comenly
Han of his mischefe some pite
And suffren him also, that he
May gon about and begge his bred
That he be not for honger ded
Or if he haue of crafte conning
And strength also, and desiring
To worchen, as he had what
But he finde neither this ne that
Than may he begge till that he
Haue getten his necessite
Or if his winning be so lite
That his labour wol not a quite
Sufficiauntly al his liuing
Yet may he go his bred begging
Fro dore to dore, he may go trace
Till he the remnaunt may purchase
Or if a man would vndertake
Any empryse for to make
In the rescous of our lay
And it defenden as he may
Be it with armes, or lettrure
Or other conuenable cure
If it be so he poore be
Than may he begge, till that he
Maie finde in trouth for to swinke
And get him clothe, meate, and drinke
Swinke he with his hondes corporel
And not with hondes espirituel.

IN all this case, and in semblables
If that there ben no reasonables
He maie begge, as I tell you here
And els not, in no manere
As william saint Amour would preche
And ofte would dispute and teche
Of this mater all openly
At Paris full solemply
And also God my soule blesse
As he had in this stedfastnesse
The acorde of the vniuersite
And of the people, as semeth me.

No good man ought it to refuse
Ne ought him thereof to excuse
Be wrothe or blithe, who so be
For I wol speke, and tell it the
Al should I die, and be put doun
As was saint Poule in derke prisoun

Or be exiled in this caas
With wrong, as maister William was
That my mother Hipocrisie
Banished for her great enuie.

My mother flemed him saint Amour
This noble did suche labour
To sustcine euer the loialte
That he to muche agilte me
He made a boke, and let it write
Wherin his life he did all write
And would eche renied begging
And liue by my traueiling
If I ne had rent ne other good
What weneth he that I were wood?
For labour might me neuer please
I haue more will to ben at ease
And haue well leuer, sothe to saie
Before the people patter and praie
And wrie me in my forerie
Under a cope of papelardie.
(O Loue) what diuel is this that I here
What wordes tellest thou me here
What sir Fallenesse that apert is
Than dredest thou not God? No certis
For selde in great thing shal he spede
In this world, that God wol drede
For folke that hem to vertue reuen
And truely on her owne liuen
And hem in goodnesse aie contente
On hem is litel thrifte isente
Suche folke drinken great misese
That life may me neuer plese
But se what golde han vserers
And siluer eke in garners
Tailagiers, and these moniours
Bailiffes, Bedels, Prouost, Countours
These liuen well nigh by rauine
The smale people hem mote encline
And thei as wolues wol hem eten
Upon the poore folke thei geten
Ful muche of that thei spende or kepe
Nis none of hem that he nil strepe
And wrine hem selfe well at full
Without scalding, thei hem pull
The strong the feble ouergothe
But I that weare my simple clothe
Robbe bothe robbing and robbours
And gile giling, and gilours
By my treget, I gather and threste
The great trealour into my cheste
That lieth with me so fast bounde
Myn high paleis do I founde
And my delites I fulfill
With wine at feestes, at my will
And tables ful of entremees
I wol no life, but ease and pees
And winne golde to spende also
For whan the great bagge is go
It cometh right with my iapes
Wake I not wel tomble mine apes
To winnen is alwaie mine entent
My purchace is better than my rent
For though I should beten be
Ouer al I entremet me
Without me maie no wight dure
I walke soules for to cure
Of all the world cure haue I
In brede and length boldly
I wol bothe preche, and eke counsailen
With hondes wol I not trauailen
For of the Pope I haue the bull
I ne holde not my wittes dull
I wol not stinten in my liue
These Emperours for to shriue
Of Kinges, Dukes, and Lordes grete
But poore folke al quite I lette
I loue no suche shriuing parde
But it for other cause be
I reche not of poore men
Her estate is not worthe an hen
Wher findest thou a swinker of labour
Haue me to his confessour
But Empresses, and Duchesses
These Quenes, and eke Countesses
These Abbesses, and eke Bigins
These great Ladies palasins
These ioly Knightes, and Bailiues
These Nonnes, and these Burgeis wiues
That Riche ben, and eke pleding
And these Maidens welfaring
Where so thei clad or naked be
Uncounsailed goeth there none fro me
And for her soules sauete
At Lorde and Lady, and her meine
I aske, whan thei hem to me shriue
The properte of al her liue
And make hem trowe, both moste and leest
Her parish Priest is but a beest
Ayens me and my company
That shrewes ben as great (as I)
For whiche I wol not hide in holde
No priuete that me is tolde
That I by worde or signe iwis
Ne wol make hem know what it is
And thei wollen also tellen me
Thei hele fro me no priuite
And for to make you hem perceiuen
That vsen folke thus to deceiuen
I wol you saine withouten drede

what

what men maie in the Gospell rede
Of sainct Mathewe the Gospellere
That saieth, as I shall you saie here.

Upon the chaire of Moses
Thus it is glosed doubtles
(That is the olde Testament
For thereby is the chaire ment)
Sitte Scribes and Pharisen
That is to saine, the cursed men
Whiche that we Ipocrites call
Doeth that thei preache I rede you all
But doeth not as thei doen a deale
That been not wearie to saie weale
But to doe well, no will haue thei
And thei would binde no folke alwaie
That been to begiled able
Burdons that been importable
On folkes shoulders thinges thei couchen
That thei nill with their fingers touchen
And why woll thei not touche it why?
For hem ne lifte nat likerly
For sadde burdons that men taken
Make folkes shoulders aken
And if thei doe ought that good be
That is for folke it should se
Her burdons larger maken thei
And maken her hemmes wide alwaie
And louen seates at the table
The first, and moste honourable
And for to han the first chairis
In Sinagogges, to hem full dere is
And willen that folke hem loute and grete
Whan that thei passen through the strete
And wollen be cleped maister also
But thei ne should not willen so
The Gospell is there ayenst I gesse
That sheweth well her wickednesse.

An other custome vse we
Of hem that woll ayenst vs be
We hate him dedly euery chone
And we woll werrey him, as one
Him that one hateth, hate we all
And coniecte, how to doen him fall
And if we seen him winne honour
Richesse or preise, through his valour
Prouende, rent, or dignite
Full faste iwis compassen we
By what ladder he is clomben so
And for to maken him doune to go
With traison we woll him defame
And doen him lese his good name
Thus from his ladder we him take
And thus his frendes foes we make
But worde ne wete shall he none
Till all his frendes been his fone
For if we did it openly
We might haue blame redily
For had he wiste of our malice
He had him kept, but he were nice.

An other is this, that if so fall
That there be one emong vs all
That doeth a good tourne, out of drede
We saine it is our alder deede
Ye likerly, though he it fained
Or that him liste, or that him dained
A man through him auaunced be
Thereof all parceners be we
And tellen folke, where so we go
That man through vs is sprongen so
And for to haue of men praising
We purchace through our flattering
Of riche men of greate poste
Letters, to witnesse our bounte
So that man wenneth that maie vs se
That all vertue in vs be
And alwaie poore we vs fain
But how so that we begge or plain
We been the folke without leasing
That all thing haue without hauing
Thus be dradde of the people iwis
And gladly my purpose is this.
I deale with no wight, but he
Haue golde and treasour greate plente
Her acquaintaunce well loue I
This moche my desire shortly
I entremete me of bridages
I make peace, and mariages
I am gladly executour
And many times a procuratour
I am sometime messagere
That falleth not to my mistere
And many times I make enquest
For me that office is nat honest
To deale with other mennes thing
That is to me a greate liking
And if that ye haue ought to doe
In place that I repaire to
I shall it speden through my witte
As sone as ye haue told me it
So that ye serue me to paie
My seruice shall be yours alwaie
But who so woll chastice me
Anone my loue loste hath he
For I loue no man in no gise
That woll me reproue or chastise
But I woll all folke undertake
And of no wight no teaching take

For I that other folke chastie
Woll not be taught fro my folie.

I Loue none Hermitage more
Al desertes, and holtes hoore
And great woodes euerichone
I let hem to the Baptist Jhon
I queth him quite and him relesse
Of Egipt all the wildernesse
To ferre were all my mansions
Fro all citees and good touns
My paleis and mine house make I
There men maie renne in openly
And saie that I the worlde forsake
But all amidde I builde, and make
My house, and swimme and plaie therein
Bette than a fishe doeth with his sinne.

Of Antechrists men am I
Of whiche that Christ saieth openly
Thei haue habite of holinesse
And liuen in sothe wichednesse
To the copie, if him talent tooke
Of the Euangelistes booke
There might he se by greate traisoun
Full many a false comparisoun
As moche as through his greate might
Be it of heate or of light
The Sunne surmounteth the Mone
That troubler is, and chaungeth sone
And the nutte kirneil the shell
I shorne nat that I you tell
Right so withouten any gile
Surmounteth this noble Euangile
The worde of any Euangelist
And to her title thei token Christ
And many sothe comparisoun
Of whiche I make no mencioun
Might men in that booke finde
Who so could of hem haue minde.

The vniuersite that tho was a slepe
Gan for to braied, and taken kepe
And at the noise, the hedde vp cast
Ne neuer sithen slept it fast
But vp it stert, and armes tooke
Ayenst this false horrible booke
All redy battaile for to make
And to the Judge the booke thei take
But thei that broughten the booke there
Hent it anone awaie for feare
Thei nolde shewe it no more a deals
But than it kept, and kepen weale
Till soche a time that thei maie se
That thei so strong woxen be
That no wight maie hem well withstonde
For by that booke thei durst not stonde
I waie thei gonne it for to bere
For thei ne durst not answere
By exposicion no glose
To that that clerkes woll appose
Ayenst the cursednesse iwis
That in that booke written is
Now wotte I nat, ne I can nat se
What maner ende that there shall be
Of all this that thei hide
But yet algate thei shall abide
Till that thei maie it bette defende
This trowe I best woll be here ende.

Thus Antechrist abiden we
For we been all of his meine
And what man that woll not be so
Right sone he shall his life forgo
Outward Lamben semen we
Full of goodnesse and of pite
And inwarde we withouten fable
Been gredy Wolues rauisable
We enuiroun bothe londe and see
With all the worlde werrien we
We woll ordain of all thing
Of folkes good, and her liuing.

If there be castell or citee
Within that any bougerons be
Although that thei of Millaine were
For thereof been thei blamed there
Or of a wight out of measure
Would leane her gold, and take vsure
For that he is so coueitous
Or if he be to Lecherous
Or these that haunten Simonie
Or prouost full of trecherie
Or Prelate liuing iolilie
Or Priest that halt his quein him by
Or olde hores hostilers
Or other baudes or bordellers
Or els blamed of any vice
Of whiche men shoulden doen iustice
By all the sainctes that we preie
But thei defende them with lampreie
With luce, with eels, with samons
With tender gees, and with capons
With tartes, or with chesses fat
With deinte flaunes, brode and flat
With caleweis, or with pullaile
With coninges, or with fine vitaile
That we vnder our clothes wide
Waken through our golet glide
Or but he woll doe come in haste

Rae veniſon bake in paſte
whether ſo that loure or groine
He ſhall haue of a corde a loigne
With whiche men ſhall him binde and lede
To brenne him for his ſinfull deede
That men ſhull here him crie and rore
I mile waie about and more
Or els he ſhall in priſon die
But if he woll his frendſhip buie
Or ſmerten that, that he hath doe
More than his gilt amounteth to
But and he couthe, through his ſleight
Doe maken vp a toure of height
Nought rought I, wheder of ſtone or tre
Or yearth, or turues though it be
Though it were of no bounde ſtone
Wrought with ſquier and ſcantilone
So that the toure were ſtuffed well
With all riches temporell
And than that he would vp dreſſe
Engins, bothe more and leſſe
To caſte at vs by euery ſide
To beare his good name wide
Soche ſleightes I ſhall you yeuen
Barelles of wine, by ſixe or ſeuen
Or golde in ſackes greate plente
He ſhould ſone deliuered be
And if he haue no ſuche ptences
Let him ſtudie in equipolences
And let lies and ſallaces
If that he would deſerue our graces
Or we ſhall beare him ſoche witneſſe
Of ſinne, and of his wretchednelle
And doen his loſe ſo wide renne
That all quicke we ſhould him brenne
Or els yeue him ſoche penaunce
That is well worſe than the pitaunce.

For thou ſhalt neuer for nothing
Conknowen a right by her clothing
The traitours full of trecherie
But thou her werkes can eſpie
And ne had the good keping be
Whilom of the vniuerſite
That kepeth the kete of chriſtendome
We had been tourmented all and ſome
Soche been the ſtinking Prophetis
Nis none of hem, that good Prophete is
For thei through wicked entencion
The yere of the incarnacion
A thouſande, and two hundred yere
Fiue and fifte ferther ne nere
Broughten a booke with ſorie grace
To yeuen enſample in common place
That ſaied thus, though it were fable
This is the Goſpell pardurable
That fro the holie ghoſt is ſent
Well were it wrothe to bee brent
Entitled was in ſoche manere
This booke, of whiche I tell here
There nas no wight in all Paris
Beforne our Ladie at paruis
That thei ne might the booke by
The ſentence pleaſed hem well truely
But I woll ſtint of this matere
For it is wonder long to here
But had that ilke booke endured
Of better eſtate I were enſured
And frendes haue I yet parde
That han me ſet in greate degre.

If all this worlde is Emperour
Gile my father, the trechour
And Empreſſe my mother is
Maugre the holie ghoſte iwis
Our mightie linage, and our rout
Reigneth in euery reigne about
And well is worthy we miniſters be
For all this worlde gouerne we
And can the folke ſo well deceiue
That none our gile can perceiue
And though thei doen, thei dare not ſaie
The ſothe dare no wight bewraie
But he in Chriſtes wrathe him ledeth
That more than Chriſt my brethren dredeth
He nis no full good champion
That dredeth ſoche ſimilacion
For that for pain woll refuſen
Vs to correcte and accuſen.
He woll not entremete by right
Ne haue God in his eye ſight
And therefore God ſhall him punice
But me ne recheth of no vice
Sithen men vs louen comunablie
And holden vs for ſo worthie
That we maie folke repreue echone
And we nill haue repreue of none
Whom ſhoulden folke worſhipen ſo
But vs that ſtinten neuer mo
To patren, while that folke maie vs ſe
Though it not ſo behinde hem be.

And where is more woode folie
Than to enhaunce chiualrie
And loue noble men and gaie
That iolie clothes weren alwaie
If thei be ſoche folke as thei ſemen
So cleane, as men her clothes demen
And that her wordes folowe her deede
It is greate pite out of drede

For

For thei woll be none Hypocritis
Of hem me thinketh greate spite is
I can not loue hem on no side
But beggers with these hoodes wide
With sleigh and pale faces leane
And graie clothes nat full cleane
But fretted full of tatar wagges
And high shoes knopped with dagges
That frouncen like a quale pipe
Or bootes riueling as a gipe
To soche folke, as I you deuise
Should princes and these lordes wise
Take all her landes and her thinges
Bothe warre and peace in gouerninges
To soche folke should a prince him yeue
That would his life in honour liue.

And if thei be nat as thei seme
That seruen thus the worlde to queme
There would I dwell to deceiue
The folke, for thei shall nat perceiue
But I ne speake in no soche wise
That men should humble hadite dispise
So that no pride there vnder be
No man should hate, as thinketh me
The poore man in soche clothing
But God ne preseth him nothing
That saieth he hath the worlde forsake
And hath to worldly glory him take
And woll of soche delices vse
Who maie that begger well excuse?
That papelarde, that him yeldeth so
And woll to worldly ease go
And saieth that he the worlde hath left
And gredily it gripeth eft
He is the honde, shame is to sain
That to his calling goeth again

But vnto you dare I not lie
But might I telen or espie
That ye perceiued it nothing
Ye should haue a starke leasing
Right in your honde thus to beginne
I nolde it let for no sinne
The God lough at the wonder tho
And euery wight gan laugh also
And saied: lo here a man right
For to be trustie to euery wight.

FAlse Semblant (q Loue) saie to me
Sith I thus haue auaunced thee
That in my court is thy dwelling
And of ribaudes shalt be my king
Wolt thou well holden my forwardes?
Ye sir, from hens forwardes
We woll a people vpon him areise
And through our gile, doen him ceise
And him on sharpe speares riue
Or other waies bring him fro liue
But if that he woll folowe iwis
That in our booke written is.

THus moche woll our booke signifie
That while Peter had maistrie
Maie neuer Jhō shewe well his migh
Now haue I you declared right
The meaning of the barke and rinde
That maketh the entencions blinde
But now at erst I woll begin
To expoune you the pithe within
And the seculers comprehende
That Christes lawe woll defende
And should it kepen and maintenen
Ayenst hem that all sustenen
And falsly to the people teachen
That Jhon betokeneth hem to preachen
That there nis lawe couenable
But thilke Gospell pardurable
That fro the holy ghost was sent
To tourne folke that been miswent.

The strength of Jhon thei vnderstonde
The grace in whiche thei saie thei stonde
That doeth the sinfull folke conuert
And hem to Jesu Christ reuert
Full many an other horriblete
Maie men in that booke se
That been commaunded doubtlesse
Ayenst the lawe of Rome expresse
And all with Antichrist thei holden
As men maie in the booke beholden
And than commaunden thei to fleen
All tho that with Peter been
But thei shall neuer haue that might
And God to forne, for strek to fight
That thei ne shall inough finde
That Peters lawe shall haue in minde
And euer holde, and so mainteen
That at the last it shall be seen
That thei shall all come thereto
For aught that thei can speake or do
And thilke lawe shall not stonde
That thei by Jhon haue vnderstonde
But maugre hem, it shall adoun
And been brought to confusion
Had neuer your father here before
Seruaunt so true, sithe he was borne
That is ayenst all nature
Sir, put you in that auenture
For though ye borowes take of me

Thei

The liberer shall ye neuer be
For hostages, ne liberne sse
Or chartres, for to beare witnesse
I take your self to recorde here
That men ne maie, in no manere
Tearen the wolfe out of his hide
Till he be slain, backe and side
Though men him beate and all defile
what wene ye that I woll begile?
For I am clothed mekely
There vnder is all my trechery
Mine harte chaungeth neuer the mo
For none habite, in whiche I go
Though I haue chere of simplenesse
I am not werie of shrewdnesse
My lemman, strained Abstenaunce
Hath mister of my purueiaunce
She had full long ago be dedde
Nere my counsaile and my redde
Let her alone, and you and me
And Loue answerde, I trust thee
without borowe, for I woll none
And false Semblant the theefe anone
Right in that ilke same place
That had of treason all his face
Right blacke within, and white without
Thanking him, gan on his knees lout.

Than was there nought, but euery man
Now to assaute, that sailen can
(by Loue) and that full hardely
Than armed thei hem comenly
Of soche armour, as to hem fell
whan thei were armed, fiers and fell
Thei went hem forthe all in a rout
And set the castell all about
Thei will not awaie for no drede
Till it so be that thei been dedde
Or till thei haue thei castell take
And foure battels thei gan make
And parted hem in foure anone
And toke her waie, and forthe thei gone
The foure gates for to assaile
Of whiche the kepers woll not faile
For thei been neither sicke ne dede
But hardie folke, and strong in dede.

Now woll I faine the countenaunce
Of false Semblant, and Abstinaunce
That been to wicked tong went
But first thei helde her parliment
Whether it to doen were
To maken hem be knowen there
Or els walken forthe disguised
But at the laste thei deuised
That thei would gone in tapinage
As it were in a pilgrimage
Like good and holie folke vnfeined
And dame Abstinence streined
Toke on a robe of Cameline
And gan her gratche as a bigine
A large couerchief of threde
She wrapped all about her hede
But she forgate not her Psaltere
A paire of beedes eke she bere
Upon a lace, all of white threde
On whiche that she her beedes bede
But she ne bought hem neuer a deale
For thei were giuen her, I wote weale
God wote of a full holie frere
That laied he was her father dere
To whom she had after went
Than any frere of his couent
And he visited her also
And many a sermone saied her to
He nolde let for man on liue
That he ne would her oft shriue
And with so greate deuocion
Thei made her confession
That thei had oft for the nones
Two heddes in one hode at ones
Of faire chappe, I deuised her thee
But pale of face sometime was she
That false traitouresse vntrewe
was like that salowe horse of hewe
That in the Apocalips is shewed
That signifieth tho folke beshrewed
That been all full of trecherie
And pale, through hypocrisie
For on that horse no colour is
But onely dedde and pale iwis
Of soche a colour enlangoured
was Abstinence iwis coloured
Of her estate she her repented
As her visage representeth.
She had a burdoune all of theft
That Gile had yeue her of his yeft
And a shrippe of faint distresse
That full was of elengenesse
And forthe she walked soberlie
And false Semblant saint, ie vous die
And as it were for soche mistere
Doen on the cope of a frere
With chere simple, and full pitous
His loking was not disdeinous
Ne proude, but meke and full pesible
About his necke he bare a Bible
And Squierly, forthe gan he gon
And for to rest his limmes vpon
He had of treason a potent

As

As he were feble, his waie he went
But in his sleue he gan to thring
A rasour sharpe, and well biting
That was forged in a forge
Whiche that men clepen Coupe gorge
So long forth her waie thei nomen
Till thei to Wicked Tong comen
That at his gate was sitting
And sawe folke in the waie passing
The pilgrimes sawe he fast by
That bearen hem full mekely
And humbly thei with him mette
Dame Abstinence first him grette
And sithe him False Semblant salued
And he hem, but he not remeued
For he ne dredde him not a deale
For whan he sawe her faces weale
Al waie in harte, him thought so
He should knowe hem bothe two
For well he knewe dame Abstinaunce
But he ne knewe not Constreinaunce
He knewe nat that she was constrained
Ne of her theues life fained
But wende she come of will all free
But she come in an other degree
And if of good will she began
That will was failed her than.

And False Semblant had he faine alse
But he knewe nat that he was false
Yet false was he, but his falsnesse
Ne could he nat espie, nor gesse
For Semblant was so slie wrought
That Falsenesse he ne espied nought
But haddest thou knowen him before
Thou wouldest on a booke haue sworne
When thou him sawe in thilke araie
That he, that whilom was so gaie
And of the daunce Jolie Robin
Was tho become a Jacobin
But sothly what so men him call
Frere Preachours been good men all
Her order wickedly thei bearen
Sothe minstrelles, if thei wearen
So been Augustins, and Cordileers
And Carmes, and eke sacked Freres
And all Freers shode and bare
Though some of hem been greate and square
Full holy men, as I hem deme
Eueriche of hem would good man seme
But shalt thou neuer of apparence
Seen conclude good consequence
In none argument iwis
If existens all failed is
For men maie finde alwaie sopheme
The consequence to enuenyme
Who so that hath had the subtelte
The double sentence for to se.

When the pilgrimes commen were
To wicked Tong that dwelled there
Her harneis nigh hem was algate
By wicked Tong adoune thei sate
That badde hem nere him for to come
And of tidinges tell him some
And saied hem: what case maketh you
To come into this place now?

Sir saied Strained Abstinaunce
We for to drie our penaunce
With hartes pitous and deuout
Are commen, as pilgrimes gon about
Well nigh on foote alwaie we go
Full doughtie been our heeles two
And thus bothe we been sent
Throughout the worlde that is mis went
To yeue ensample, and preache also
To fischen sinfull men we go
For other fisching, ne fisshe we
And sir, for that charite
As we be wont, herbrowe we craue
Your life to amenne Christ it saue
And so it should you not displease
We woulden, if it were your ease
A short sermon vnto you sain
And wicked Tong answered again
The house (quod he) soche (as ye se)
Shall nat be warned you for me
Saie what you list, and I woll here
Graunt mercie swete sir dere.

(quod alderfirst) dame Abstinence
And thus began she her sentence.
Sir, the first vertue certaine
The greatest, and moste soueraine
That maie be founde in any man
For hauing, or for wit he can
That is his tong to refrain
Therto ought euery wight him pain
For it is better still be
Than for to speaken harme parde
And he that harkeneth it gladly
He is no good man sikerly
And sir, abouen all other sinne
In that art thou moste giltie inne
Thou speake a iape, not long a go
And sir, that was right euill doe
Of a yong man, that here repaired
And neuer yet this place apaired
Thou saidest he awaited nothing

But to disceiue faire Welcoming
Ye said nothyng sothe of that
But sir, ye lie, I tel you plat
He ne cometh no more, ne goeth parde
I trowe ye shal him neuer se
Faire Welcoming in prison is
That ofte hath plaied with you er this
The fairest games that he coude
Without filthy stil or loude
Now dare she not her selfe solace
Ye han also the man do chace
That he dare neither come ne go
What meueth you to hate him so?
But properly your wicked thought
That many a false lealing hath thought
That meueth your foule eloquence
That iangleth euer in audience
And ou the folke ariseth blame
And doeth hem dishonour and shame
For thing that maie haue no preuing
But likelinesse, and contriuing.

For I dare saine, that Reason demeth
It is not al soth thing that semeth
And it is sinne to controue
Thing that is to reproue
This wote ye wele, and sir: therfore
Ye arne to blame the more
And natheless, he recheth lite
He yeueth not now therof a mite
For if he thought harme parfaie
He would come and gone all daie
He coude him selfe not abstein
Now cometh he not, and that is sene
For he ne taketh of it no cure
But if it be through auenture
And lasse than other folke algate
And thou her watchest at the gate
With speare in thine arest al waie
There muse musarde all the daie
Thou wakest night and daie for thought
I wis thy traueile is for nought
And Ielousie withouten faile
Shall neuer quite thee thy traueile
And skathe is, that Faire Welcoming
Without any trespassing
Shal wrongfully in prison be
There wepeth and languisheth he
And though thou neuer yet i wis
Agiltest man no more but this
Take not a grefe it were worthy
To put the out of this Baily
And after warde in Prison lie
And fettred the till that thou die
For thou shalt for this sinned welle
Right in the Deuils arse of Helle
But if that thou repente the
Waifaie, thou liest falsely (quod he)
What, welcome with mischaunce now
Haue I therfore herbered you
To saie me shame, and eke reproue
With sorie happe to your behoue
Am I to day your herbegere
Go herber you els where, than here
That han a lier called me
Two tregetours arte thou and he
That in mine house, do me this shame
And for my sothe sawe ye me blame
Is this the sermon that ye make?
To all the diuels I me take
Or els God thou me confounde
But er men didden this castell founde
It passeth not ten daies or twelue
But it was tolde right to my selue
And as thei saide, right so tolde I
He kiste the Rose priuily
Thus saide I now, and haue said yore
I not where he did any more
Why should men saie me suche a thing
If it had ben gabbing
Right so saide I, and woll saie yet
I trowe I lied not of it
And with my bemes I woll blowe
To all neighbours arowe
How he hath bothe comen and gone
Tho spake false Semblant right anone
All is nat gospell out of doute
That men saine in the toune aboute
Lay no deefe eere to my speking
I swere you sir, it is gabbing
I trow ye wote well certainly
That no man loueth him tenderly
That saith him harme, if he wote it
All be he neuer so poore of wit
And sothe is also sikerly
This know ye sir, as wel as I
That louers gladdly wol visiten
The places there her loues habiten
This man you loueth, and eke honoureth
This man to serue you laboureth
And clepeth you his frende so dere
And this man maketh you good chere
And euery where that you meteth
He you saleweth, and he you greteth
He preseth nat so ofte, that ye
Oughte of his coming encombred be
There presen other folke on you
Ful ofter than he doeth now
And if his hert him strained so
Unto the Rose for to go

Ye should him sene so ofte nede
That ye should take him with the dede
Ye coude his comming not forbeare
Though he him thrilled with a speare
It nere not than, as it is now
But trusteth well, I sweare it you
That it is clene out of his thought
Sir, certes he ne thinketh it nought
No more ne doth faire welcoming
That sore abieth all this thing
And if thei were of one assent
Full soone were the Rose hent
The maugre yours would be
And sir, of o thing herkeneth me
Sithe ye this man, that loueth you
Han saide suche harme, and shame now
Witteth well, if he gelled it
Ye maie well demen in your wit
He nolde nothing loue you so
Ne callen you his frende also
But night and daie he woll wake
The castell to distroie and take
Yf it were sothe, as ye deuise
Or some man in some maner wise
Might it warne him euerydele
Or by himselfe parceiue wele
For sithe he might not come and gone
As he was whilom wonte to done
He might it soone wite and se
But now all otherwise wote he
Than haue we sir all vtterly
Deserued Hell, and iolily
The death of Hell doutlesse
That thrallen folke so giltlesse.

False Semblant so proueth this thing
That he can none answering
And seeth alwaie, suche apparaunce
That nigh he fel in repentaunce
And said him, sir: it maie well be
Semblant, a good man semen ye
And Abstinence, full wise ye seme
Of o talent you bothe I deme
What counsaile wol ye to me yeuen:
Right here anon thou shalt be shriuen
And say thy sinne, without more
Of this shalt thou repent sore
For I am Priest, and haue poste
To shriue folke of most dignite
That ben as wide as world maie dure
Of al this world I haue the cure
And that had neuer yet persoun
Ne vicarie of no manner toun
And God wot I haue of the
A thousande times more pite
Than hath thy Priest parochiall
Though he thy frende be speciall
I haue auantage in o wise
That your Prelates den not so wise
Ne halfe so lettred (as am I)
I am licensed boldely
In diuinite for to rede
And to confessen out of drede
yf ye wol you now confesse
And leaue your sinnes more and lesse
without abode, knele doune anon
And you shal haue absolucion.

¶ Here endeth the Romaunt of the Rose.

¶ Here after foloweth the Booke of Troilus and Cresseide.

THe double sorow of Troilus to tellen
That was king Priamus sonne of Troy
In louing, how his auentures fellen
From wo to wele, and after out of ioy
My purpose is, er that I parte froy
Thou Thesiphone, thou helpe me for tendite
These wofull verses, that wepen as I write

To the I clepe, thou goddesse of tourment
Thou cruel furie, sorowing euer in paine
Helpe me that am the sorowfull instrument
That helpeth louers, as I can complaine
For wel sit it, the soth for to saine
A wofull wight to haue a drery fere
And to a sorowfull tale a sory chere

For I that God of Loues seruauntes serue
Ne dare to loue, for mine vnlibelinesse
Prayen for spede, al should I therfore sterue
So farre am I fro his helpe in derkenesse
But natheless, if this may done gladnesse
To any louer, and his cause aueile
Haue he my thanke, and mine be the traueile

But ye louers that bathen in gladnesse
yf any drope of pite in you be
Remembreth you of passed heuinesse
That ye haue felte, and on the aduersite
Of other folke, and thinketh how we that ye
Han felte, that loue durste you displease
Or ye han won him with to great an ease

And

And praieth for hem that ben in the cace
Of Troilus, as ye may after here
That he hem bring in heuen to solace
And eke for me praieth to God so dere
That I haue might to shew in some manere
Suche paine and wo, as loues folke endure
In Troilus vnsely auenture

And biddeth eke for hem that ben dispeired
In loue, that neuer will recouerd be
And eke for hem that falsely ben apeired
Through wicked tonges, be it he or she
Thus biddeth God for his benignite
So graunt hē soone out of this world to pace
That ben dispaired out of loues grace

And biddeth eke for hem that ben at ease
That god hem graūt aie good perseueraunce
And sende hem grace her loues for to please
That it to loue be worship and pleasaunce
For so hope I my selfe best to auaunce
To pray for hem, that loues seruauntes be
And write her wo, and liue in charite

And for to haue of hem compassioun
As though I were her owne brother dere
Now herkeneth with a good entencioun
For now wol I go streight to my matere
In whiche ye may the double sorowes here
Of Troilus, in louing of Creseide
And how she forsoke him er that she deide.

It is wel wist, how that the grekes strōg
In armes wt a thousand shippes went
To Troie wardes, and the cite long
Besiegeden nigh ten yeres ere thei stent
And in diuers wise, and one entent
The rauishing to wreke of quene Heleine
By Paris don, thei wroughten all her peine.

Now fell it so, that in the toune there was
Dwelling a Lord of great authorite
A great diuine, that cleped was Calcas
That in that science so experte was, that he
Knew wel, that Troie should distroied be
By answere of his God, that hight thus
Dan Phebus, or Apollo Delphicus

So whan this Calcas knew by calculing
And eke by the answere of this God Apollo
That grekes should suche a people bring
Through whiche that Troy must be forbo
He caste anone out of the toune to go
For wel he wist by sorte, that Troie sholde
Distroied be, ye would who so nolde

Wherfore to departen softely
Tok purpose ful this forthinowing wise
And to the Grekes host ful priuely
He stale anone, and thei in curteis wise
Did him both worship and seruice
In trust that he hath conning hem to rede
In euery peril, which that was to drede

Great rumour rose, whan it was first espied
In al the toune, and openly was spoken
That Calcas traitour fled was and alied
To hem of Grece, and caste was to be wroken
On him, that falsly hath his faith broken
And said: he and al his kinne atones
Were worthy to be brent both fell and bones

Now had Calcas lefte in this mischaunce
Unwist of this false and wicked dede
A doughter, whiche was in great penaunce
And of her life she was ful sore in drede
And wist neuer what best was to rede
And as a widowe was she, and all alone
And nist to whome she might make her mone

Creseide was this ladies name aright
As to my dome, in al Troies cite
Most fairest lady, fer passing euery wight
So angelike shone her natife beaute
That no mortall thing semed she
And therwith was she so parfite a creature
As she had be made in scorning of nature

This lady, that al day herde at eare
Her fathers shame falsed, and traisoun
(Ful nigh out of her wit for sorow and feare
In widowes habite large of samite broun)
Before Hector on knees she fill adoun
His mercy bad, her selfe excusing
With pitous voice, and tenderly weping

Now was this Hector pitous of nature
And saw, that she was sorowful begone
And that she was so faire a creature
Of his goodnesse he gladed her anone
And said: let your fathers traison gone
Forthy with mischance, & ye your selfe in ioye
Dwelleth with vs, while you list in Troye

And al the honour, ỹ men may do you haue
As ferforth as though your father dwelt here
Ye shul haue, and your body shul men saue
As fer as I may ought enquire and here
And she him thanked with ful humble chere
And ofter wolde and it had ben his will
Tok her leaue, went home and held her still

And in her house she abode with such meine
As til her honour nede was to holde
And while she was dwelling in that cite
She kepte her estate, and of yong and olde
Ful wel beloued, and wel men of her tolde
But whether that she children had or none
I rede it nat, therfore I let it gone

The thinges fellen as thei don of werre
Betwixen hem of Troie and Grekes ofte
For some day boughten thei of Troie it derre
And eft the grekes founden nothing soft
The folke of Troie: and thus fortune aloft
And vnder eft gan hem to whelmen bothe
After her course, aie while ẏ thei wer wrothe

But how this toune came to distruccion
Ne falleth not to purpose me to tel
For it were a longe digression
Fro my mater, and you to long to dwel
But the Troyan iestes, as thei fel
In Omer, or in Dares, or in Dite
Who so ẏ can, may reden hem as thei write.

But though the grekes hem of Troie shetten
And her cite besieged all aboute
Her olde vlages nolde thei not letten
As to honouren her goddes ful deuoute
But aldermost in honour out of doute
Thei had a relike hight Palladion
That was her trust abouen euerichon

And so befel whan comen was the time
Of April, whan clothed is the mede
With newe grene, of lusty veer the prime
And swete smelling floures white and rede
In sondrie wise shewed as I rede
The folke of Troie, their obseruaunces olde
Palladions feest went for to holde

Vnto the temple in all their best wise
Generally there went many a wighe
To herken of Palladions seruice
And namely many a lusty knight
And many a lady fresh, and maiden bright
Ful wel araide bothe most and leest
Bothe for the season and the hie feest

Among these other folke was Creseida
In widdowes habite blacke: but natheles
Right as our first letter is now an a
In beaute first, so stode she makeles
Her goodly lokyng gladded al the prees
Nas neuer sene thing to be prailed so derre
Nor vnder cloude blake so bright a sterre

As was Creseide, thei saiden euerichone
That her behelde in her blake wede
And yet she stode ful lowe and stil alone
Behinde other folke in litel stede
And nie the dore vnder shames drede
Simple of atire, and debonaire of chere
With full assured loking and manere

This Troilus as he was wont to gide
His yonge knightes ladde hem vp and doune
In thilke large temple on euery side
Beholding aie the ladies of the toune
Now here now there, for no deuocioune
Had he to none, to reuen him his rest
But gan to praise and lacke whom he lest

And in his walke ful faste he gan to waiten
If knight or squier of his company
Gan forto sike, or let his eyen baiten
On any woman, that he coude espie
Ye would smile, and holde it a folie
And say hem thus: O lorde she slepeth softe
For loue of the, whan thou turnest ful ofte

I haue herde tel pardieux of your liuing
ye louers, and eke your lewde obseruaunces
And whiche a labour folke haue in winning
Of loue, and in keping suche doutaunces:
And whan your pray is lost, wo and penaunces
O, very fooles, blinde and nice be ye
There is not one can ware by an other be

And with ẏ worde he gan cast vp the browe
Ascaunces lo, is this not wel ispoken
At whiche the God of Loue gan loken rowe
Right for dispite, and shope him to be wroken
He hidde anon his bowe was not broken
For sodainly he hitte him at the full
And yet as proude a pecocke gan he pul

O blinde worlde, o blinde entencion
How often falleth al the effecte contraire
Of surquedrie and foule presumpcioun
For caught is proude, & caught is debonaire
This Troilus is clomben on the staire
And litel weneth that he mote descenden
But al day faileth that fooles wenden

As proude bayard begynneth for to skippe
Out of the way, so pricketh him his corne
Till he a lasshe haue of the longe whippe
Than thinketh he, though I prance al beforne
First in the traise, full fatte and newe ishorne
Yet am I but an horse, and horses lawe
I must endure, and with my feeres drawe

So fared it by this fiers and proude knight
Though he a worthy kinges sonne were
And wende nothing had had suche might
Ayenst his wil, that should his herte stere
yet with a loke his hert wore on fire
That he that now was most in pride aboue
Wore sodainly mooste subiect vnto loue

For thy ensample taketh of this man
Ye wise, proude, and worthy folkes all
To shonnen loue, whiche that so sone can
The fredome of your hertes to him thral
For euer it was, and euer it be shall
That loue is he that al thing may binde
For no man maie fordo the law of kinde

That this be sothe, hath preued and doth yet
For this (trowe I) ye know al and some
Wen reden nat that folke han greater wit
Than thei, ỹ han ben most with loue inome
And strengest folke ben therwith ouercome
The worthiest and greatest of degre
This was and is, and yet man shal it se

And trueliche that sitte well to be so
For alderwisest han therwith ben plesed
And thei that han ben aldermoste in wo
With loue, han ben comforted most and esed
And ofte it hath the cruell herte apesed
And worthy folke made worthier of name
And causeth most to dreden vice and shame

Now sith it may nat goodly be withstonde
And is a thing so vertuous in kinde
Refuseth nought to loue, for to ben bonde
Sithe as him selue list he may you binde
The yerde is bette that bowen wol e winde
Than that that brest, and therfore I you rede
Now followeth him, that so well can you lede

But for to tellen forthe in speciall
As of this kinges sonne, of whiche I tolde
And leuen other thing collaterall
Of him thinke I, my tale forth to holde
Bothe of his ioye, and of his cares colde
And his werke, as touching this matere
For I it gan, I wol therto refere

Within the tẽple he wente him forth playing
This Troilus, of euery wight about
On this lady, and now on that loking
Where so the were of toune, or of without
And vpon case befil, that through a rout
His eye perced, and so depe it went
Til on Creseide it smote, and there it stent

And sodainly for wonder wext astoned
And gan her bet beholde in thrifty wise
O very God thouzt he, where hast ỹ wonned
That art so faire, and goodly to deuise
Therwith his hart gan to sprede and rise
And softe sighed, lest men might him here
And caught ayen his first playing chere

She nas nat with the moste of her stature
But al her limmes so wel answering
Weren to womanhode, that creature
was neuer lasse mannishe in seming
And eke the pure wise of her meaning
Shewed wel, that men might in her gesse
Honour, estate, and womanly noblesse

Tho Troilus, right wonder wel withall
Gan for to like her meaning and yet there
Whiche somdele deignous was, for she let fal
Her loke alitel a side, in suche manere
Ascaunces, what may I nat stonden here
And after that her loking gan she light
That neuer thought him sene so good a sight

And of her loke in him there gan to quiken
So great desire, and suche affection
That in his hartes bottom gan to sticken
Of her his fire, and depe impression
And though he erst had pored vp and doun
Than was he glad his hornes into shrinke
Unnethes wist he how to loke or winke

Lo, he that lete him selue so conning
And scorned hem that loues paines dryen
Was ful vnware that loue had his dwelling
Within the subtel stremes of her eyen
That sodainly him thought he felte dien
Right with her loke, the spirite in his herte
Blessed be loue, that thus can folke conuerte

She this in blacke, liking to Troilus
Ouer al thing he stode for to beholde
But his desire, ne wherfore he stode thus
He neither chere made, ne worde tolde
But from a ferre, his maner for to holde
On other thing somtime his loke he cast
And ofte on her, while that the seruice last

And after this, nat fullische al a whaped
Out of the temple eseliche he wente
Repenting him that he euer had yiaped
Of loues folke, lest fully the discente
Of scorne fil on him selfe, but what he mente
Leste it were wiste on any maner side
His wo he gan dissimulen and hide

Whan he was fro this temple thus departed
He streight anone vnto his palais turneth
Right with her loke, through shotte & darted
Al saineth he in luste that he soiourneth
And al his chere and speche also he burneth
And aie of loues seruauntes euery while
Him selfe to wrie, at hem he gan to smile

And said lord, so thei liue al in lust
Ye louers, for the conningest of you
That seruest moste ententifeliche and best
Him tite as often harme therof as prowe
Your hire is quite ayen, ye God wote howe
Not wel for wel, but shorne for good seruise
In faithe your order is reuled in good wise

In no certaine ben your obseruaunces
But it a sely fewe pointes be
Ne nothing asketh so great attendaunces
As doeth your laie, and that know al ye
But that is not the worst, as mote I the
But tolde I you the worste point, I leue
Al saide I sothe, ye wolden at me greue

But take this, that ye louers ofte eschewe
Or els done of good entencion
Ful ofte thy lady wol it misse construewe
And deme it harme in her opinion
And yet if she for other enchelon
Be wroth, thē shalt thou haue a groin anone
Lorde, wel is him that may bene of you one

But for al this, whan that he seeth his time
He held his pees, non other bote him gained
For loue began his fethers so to lime
That wel vneth vnto his folke he fained
That other bely nedes him distrained
So wo was him, that what to done he nist
But bad his folke to gone where as hem list

And whan that he in chambre was alone
He doune on his beddes fete him sette
And first he gan to sike, and ofte to grone
And thought aie on her so withouten lette
That as he satte and woke, his spirite mette
That he her saugh, and temple, & all the wise
Right of her loke, and gan it newe auise

Thus gan he make a mirrour of his minde
In whiche he saugh al holly her figure
And that he wel coude in his hert finde
It was to him a right good auenture
To loue suche one, and if he did his cure
To seruen her, yet might he fal in grace
Or els, for one of her seruauntes pace

Imagining, that trauelle nor grame
Ne might, for so goodly one be lorne
Is she, ne him for his desire no shame
Al were it wiste, but in prise and vp borne
Of al louers, wel more than before me
This argumented he, in his ginning
Ful vnauised of his wo comming

Thus toke he purpose loues crafte to sewe
And thought he would worken priuely
First to hide his desire in mewe
From euery wight ibore, al ouerly
But he might ought recouered ben therby
Remembring him, that loue to wide iblowe
Yelt bitter frute, though swete sede be sowe

And ouer al this, ful mokel more he thought
What for to speke, and what to holden inne
And what to arten, her to loue he sought
And on a longe anone right to beginne
And gan loude on his sorowe for to winne
For with good hope, he gan fully assente
Creseide for to loue, and nought repente

And of his longe not onely his sentence
As write mine auctour called Lolius
But plainely saue our tonges difference
I dare wel say, in al that Troilus
Saied in his longe, lo euery worde rist thus
As I shal saine, and who so list it here
Lo next this verse, he may it finde here

¶ The longe of Troilus.

If no loue is, o God what fele I so
And if loue is, what thing and whiche is he
If loue be good, from whence cometh my wo
If it be wicke, a wonder thinketh me
Whan euery turment and aduersite
That cometh of him, may to me sauery thinke
For aie thurst I the more that iche it drinke

And if that at mine owne luste I brenne
Frō whēce cometh my wailing & my pleinte
If harme agree me, wherto plaine I thenne
I not, ne why, vnwery that I feinte
O quiche death, o swete harme so queinte
How may of the in me, be suche quantite
But if that I consente that it so be

And if that I consente, I wrongfully
Complaine iwis, thus posed to and fro
Al sterelesse within a bote am I
Amidde the see, atwixen windes two
That in contrarie stonden euer mo
Alas, what is this wonder maladie?
For heate of colde, for colde of heate I die

And

And to the God of loue thus saide he.
With pitous voice, O lorde now yours is
My spirite, whiche that ought yours be
You thonke I lord, ỹ han me brought to this
But whether goddesse or woman iwis
Sye be, I not whiche, that ye do me serue
But as her man I wol aie liue and sterue

Ye stonden in her eien mightely
As in a place to your vertue digne
Wherfore lorde, if my seruice or I
May liken you, so bethe to me benigne
For mine estate royal here I resigne
Into her honde, and with ful humble chere
Become her man, as to my lady dere

In him ne deigned sparen blode royall
The fire of loue, wherefro God me blesse
Ne him forbare in no degre for all
His vertue, or his excellent prowesse
But helde him as his thrall lowe in distresse
And brende him so in sondrie wise aie newe
That sixty times a day he losse his hewe.

So muchell daie fro daie his owne thought
For lusse to her, gan quicken and encrease
That eueriche other charge he sette at nouzt
For thy ful ofte, his hotte fire to cease
To sene her goodly loke he gan to preasse
For therby to ben eased wel he wende
And aie the nere he was, the more he brende

For aie the nere the fire the hotter is
This (trowe I) knoweth al this company
But were he ferre or nere, I dare saie this
By night or daie, for wisedome or folie
His harte, whiche that is his brestes ye
Was aie on her, that fairer was to seen
Than euer was Helein, or Polixene.

Ebe of the daie there passed nat an houre
That to himselfe a thousande time he saide
God goolie, to whom I serue and laboure
As I best can, now would God Creseide
Ye woulden on me rue, er that I deide
My dere harte alas, mine heele and hewe
And life is losse, but ye woll on me rewe

All other dredes weren from him fledde
Bothe of thassiege, and his saluacion
Ne in desire none other founes bredde
But argumentes to his conclusion
That she on him would han compassion
And he to been her man, while he maie dure
Lo here his life, and from his death his cure.

The sharpe shoures fell, of armes preue
That Hector or his other brethren didden
Ne made him onely therefore ones meue
And yet was he, wher so men went or ridden
Found one the best, and lengest time abiden
There peril was, and eke did suche trauaile
In armes, that to thinke it was meruaile

But for none hate he to the grekes had
Ne also for the rescous of the toun
Ne made him thus in armes for to mad
But onely lo, for this conclusioun
To liken her the bet for his renoun
Fro daie to daie in armes so he spedde
That the Grekes as the death him dredde

And fro this forth tho reft him loue his slepe
And made his meate his foe, and eke his sorow
Gan multiplie, that who so toke hepe
It shewed in his hewe both euen and morow
Therfore a title he gan him for to borowe
Of other sicknesse, lest men of him wende
That the hotte fire of loue him brende

And saied he had a feuer, and fared amis
But were it certain I can nat saie
If that his Ladie vnderstode nat this
Or fained her she nist, one of the twaie
But well rede I, that by no maner waie
Ne semed it that she on him rought
Or of his paine, what so euer he thought.

But than felt this Troilus soche wo
That he was welnigh wood, for aie his dredde
Was this, that she some wight loued so
That neuer of him she would han taken hede
For whiche him thought he felte herte blede
Ne of his wo nedurst he nought begin
To tellen her, for all this worlde to win.

But whan he had a space from his care
Thus to himselfe full oft he gan to plain
He saied, o foole now art thou in the snare
That whilom iapedest at ioues pain
Now art ỹ hent, now gnaw thin owne chain
Thou were aie woned eche louer reprehende
Of thing fro which thou canst nat ỹ defende.

what woll now euery louer saine of thee
If this be wist? But euer in thine absence
Laughen in scorne, and sain lo there goth he
That is the man of greate sapience
That helde vs louers lesse in reuerence
Now thãked be god, he maie gon on ỹ daunce
Of hem that loue lisse lebly auaunce.

But o thou wofull Troilus, God would
Sithe thou must louen, through thy destine
That thou beset wer of soche one, that should
Knowe all thy wo, all lacked her pite
But also could in loue towardes thee
Thy ladie is, as frost in winter Mone
And thou forgo, as Snowe in fire is sone.

God would I were ariued in the port
Of death, to whiche my sorowe woll me lede
Ah Lorde, to me it were a greate comfort
Than were I quite of languishing in drede
For by my hidde sorowe i blowe in brede
I shall beiaped been a thousande time
More than that foole, of whose foly mē rime

But now helpe God, and ye swete, for whō
I plaine, i cought ye neuer wight so fast
O mercie dere harte, and helpe me from
The death, for I, while that my life maie last
More than my self woll loue you to my last
And with some frendly loke gladeth me swete
Though neuer more thing ye me behete.

These wordes, and full many an other mo
He spake, and called euer in his compleinte
Her name, for to tellen her his wo
Till nigh that he in salte teeres dreinte
All was for nought, she heard nat his pleinte
And whan that he bethought on that folie
A thousande folde his wo gan multiplie.

Bewailing in his chamber thus alone
A frende of his, that called was Pandare
Came ones in vnware, and heard him grone
And sawe his frend in soche distresse and care
Alas (q he) who causeth all this fare?
O mercie God, what vnhap maie this mene?
Han now thus sone Grekes made you lene?

Or hast thou some remorce of conscience?
And art now fall in some deuocion
And wailest for thy sinne and thine offence
And hast for ferde cought contricion
God saue hem, that besieged han our toun
That so can laie our iolite on presse
And bring our lustie folke to holinesse.

These wordes saied he for the nones all
That w̄ soche thing he mizt him angry make
And with his angre doen his sorowe fall
As for a time, and his corage awaken
But well wist he, as ferre as tonges speaken
There nas a man of greater hardinesse
Than he, ne more desired worthinesse.

What cas (q Troilus) or what auenture
Hath gided thee to seen me languishing
That am refuse of euery creature?
But for the loue of God, at my praiyng
Go hence awaie, for certes my diyng
Woll thee disease, and I mote nedes deie
Therfore go waie, there nis no more to seie.

But if thou wene I be thus sicke for drede
It is nat so, and therefore scorne nought
There is an other thing I take of hede
Wel more thā ought ẏ Grekes hā yet wrought
Which cause is of my deth for sorow & thought
But though that I now tell it thee ne leste
Be thou nat wrothe, I hide it for the beste.

This Pādare, that nigh malt for wo & routh
Full often saied alas, what maie this be
Now frende (q he) if euer loue or trouth
Hath been er this betwiren thee and me
Ne doe thou neuer soche a cruelte
That hiden fro thy frende so greate a care
Wost thou not well that I am Pandare?

I woll parten with thee all thy paine
If it so be I doe thee no comfort
As it is frendes right, sothe for to saine
To enterparten wo, as glad disport
I haue and shall, for true or false report
In wrong and right iloued thee all my liue
Hide not thy wo fro me, but tell it bliue.

Than gan this sorowfull Troilus to like
And saied him thus, God leue it be my best
To tellen thee, for sithe it maie thee like
Yet woll I tell it, though my harte brest
And well wote I, thou maiest doe me no rest
But lest thou deme I trust nat to thee
Now herke frende, for thus it stant with me.

Loue, ayenst the whiche who so defendeth
Him selfen moste, him alderlest auaileth
With dispeire so sorowfully me offendeth
That streight vnto the deth min hart saileth
Thereto desire, so brenningly me assaileth
That to been slain it were a greater ioie
To me, than king of Grece be and of Troie.

Suffiseth this, my full frende Pandare
That I haue saied, for now wotest ẽ my wo
And for the loue of God my colde care
So hide it well, I tolde it neuer to mo
For harmes mighten folowen mo than two
If it were wist, but be thou in gladnesse
And let me sterue vnknowe of my distresse.

How

How hast thou thus vnkindly and long
Hid this fro me, thou foole? (q Pandarus)
Parauēture thou maiest after soche one long
That mine auise anone maie helpen vs
This were a wonder thing (q Troilus)
Thou couldest neuer in loue thy selfen wisse
How deuill maiest thou bringen me to blisse.

Right so fare I, vnhappie for me
I loue one best, and that me smeteth sore
And yet parauenture I can reden thee
And nat my self, repreue me no more
I haue no cause I wote well for to sore.
As doeth an hauke, that listeth for to plaie
But to thine helpe, yet som what can I saie.

ye Troilus, now herken (q Pandare)
Though I be nice, it happeth often so
That one that axes doeth full euill fare
By good counsaile can kepe his frend therfro
I haue my self seine a blinde man go
There as he fell, that could loken wide
A foole maie eke a wise man oft gide.

And of o thing, right siker maiest thou be
That certain, for to dien in the pain
That I shall neuer mo discouer thee
Ne by my trouth, I hepe nat restrain
Thee fro thy loue, although it were Helein
That is thy brothers wife, if iche it wist
Be what she be, and loue her as thee list.

A whetstone is no keruing instrument
But yet it maketh sharpe keruing tolis
And after ỹ wost that I haue aught mis went
Eschue thou that, for soche thing to schole is
Thus often wise men been waren by foolis
If thou so doe, thy wit is well bewared
By his contrary is euery thing declared.

Therefore, as frendfulliche in me assure
And tell me platte, what is thine encheson
And finall cause of wo, that ye endure
For doubteth nothing, mine entencion
Nas nat to you of reprehension
To speake as now, for no wight maie bireue
A man to loue, till that him list to leue.

For how might euer swetnesse haue be know
To him, that neuer tasted bitternesse
No man wot what gladnesse is I trowe
That neuer was in sorowe, or some distresse
Eke white by black, by shame eke worthines
Eche set by other, more for other semeth
As men maie seen, and so the wise it demeth.

And weteth wel, that both two been vicis
Mistrusten all, or els all leue
But well I wote, the meane of it no vice is
As for to trusten some wight is a preue
Of trouth, and for thy would I fain remeue
Thy wrong conceipt, & do the some wizt trust
Thy wo to tell, and tell me if thee lust.

Sithe thus of two contraries is o lore
I that haue in loue so oft assaied
Greuaunces, ought connen well the more
Counsailen thee, of that thou art dismaied
And eke thee ne ought not been euill apaied
Though I desire with thee for to bere
Thine heuie charge, it shall thee lasse dere.

The wise eke saieth, wo him that is alone
For and he fall, he hath none helpe to rise
And sithe thou hast a felowe, tell thy mone
For this nis nought certain the next wise
To winnen loue, as teachen vs the wise
To wallowe and wepe, as Niobe the quene
Whose teeres yet in marble been iseen.

I wote well that it fared thus by me
As to thy brother Paris, an hierdesse
Whiche that cleped was Oenone
Wrote in a complaint of her heuinesse
Yet saw we the letter that she wrote, I gesse
Naie neuer yet i wis (q Troilus)
Now (q Pandare) herkeneth it was thus.

Let be thy weping, and thy derinesse
And let vs lissen wo, with other speche
So maie thy wofull time seme lesse
Delite nought in wo, thy wo to seche
As doen these fooles, that her sorowes eche
With sorowe, whan thei han misauenture
And lusten nought to seechen other cure.

Phebus, that first founde art of medicine
(q she) and coud in euery wightes care
Remedy and rede, by herbes he knewe fine
Yet to himself his conning was full bare
For loue had him so bounden in a snare
All for the doughter of king Admete
That all his craft ne coud his sorowe bete.

Men saine to wretche is consolacion
To haue an other felowe in his paine
That ought well been our opinion
For bothe thou and I of loue plain
So full of sorowe am I, sothe to saine
That certainly, no more hard grace
Maie sit on me, for why there is no space.

Yf God wol, thou art nought agast of me
Lest I would of thy lady the begile
Thou wost thy self, whom that I loue parde
As I best can, gon sithen long while
And sithen thou wost, I do it for no wile
And sithe I am he, that thou trusteth most
Tel me somwhat, sens al my wo thou wotte

Yet Troilus, for al this no worde saide
But long he laie still, as he deed were
And after this, with sihing he abraide
And to Pandarus voice he lent his eere
And vp his eien cast he, and than in feere
Was Pandarus, lest that in frenesye
He should fal or els sone deye

And said awake full wonderliche sharpe
What doumbrest thou, as in a litargie?
Or art thou like an Asse to the harpe
That hereth soun, whan men ỹ strynges ply?
But in his minde, of that no melodie
May sinke him to gladen, for that he
So dull is, in his bestialite

And with this, Pandare of his wordes stent
But Troilus to him no thing answerde
For why, to tel was nought his entent
Neuer to no man, for whom that he so ferde
For it is said, men maken ofte a yerde
With which the maker is him self ibeten
In sondrie maner, as these wise treten

And nameliche in his counsaile telling
That toucheth loue, that ought ben secre
For of him self it woll inough out spring
But if that it the bet gouerned be
Eke somtime it is crafte to seme slee
For thing, which in effecte men hunten faste
Al this gan Troilus in his harte caste

But natheless, whan he had herde him crie
Awake he gan, and like wonder sore
And said frende, though that I still lie
I nam not deefe, now peace and crie no more
For I haue herde thy wordes, and thy lore
But suffer me my fortune to bewailen
For thy prouerbes may nought me auailen

Nor other cure canst thou none for me
Eke I nill not ben cured, I woll die
What know I of the quene Niobe?
Let be thine olde ensampies, I the prey
No frende (q Pandarus) therfore I sey
Suche is delite of fooles to bewepe
Her wo, but seken boote thei ne kepe

Now know I that reson in the faileth
But tell me, if I wiste what she were
For whome that the al misauenture aileth
Durste thou that I tolde it in her eere
Thy wo, sith thou darst not thy selfe for feere
And her besought, on the to han some routhe
Why nay (q he) by God and by my trouthe

What, not as bestily (q Pandarus)
As though mine owne life lay in this nede
Why no parde sir (q this Troilus)
And why? for that thou shouldest neuer spede
Wost thou that wel: ye that is out of drede
(q Troilus) for al that euer ye conne
She wol to no suche wretche as I be wonne

(q Pandarus) alas what may this be
That thou dispaired art, thus causelesse
What, liueth nat thy lady, benedicite
How wost thou so, that thou art graceles
Suche euil is not alwaie botelesse
Why put not impossible thus thy cure
Sithe thing to come is ofte in auenture

I graunt wel that thou endurest wo
As sharpe as doth he Tesiphus in hell
Whose stomake foules tiren euer mo
That highten vultures, as bokes tell
But I may not endure that thou dwell
In so vnskilful an opinion
That of thy wo nis no curacion

But ones nil, thou, for thy cowarde herte
And for thine ire, and folish wilfulnesse
For wantrust tellen of thy sorowes smerte
Ne to thine owne helpe, do besinesse
As moche as speke a worde, ye more or lesse
But liest as he that of life nothing retche
What woman coude loue suche a wretche

What may she demen other of thy dethe
Yf thou thus die, and she not why it is
But that for feare, is polden vp thy brethe
For Grekes han besieged vs iwis
Lord which a thanke shalt ỹ haue thā of this
Thus wol she saine, and al the toune atones
The wretch is deed, the diuel haue his bones

Thou maiste alone here wepe, crie, & knele
But loue a woman that she wote it nought
And she wol quite it that thou shalt not fele
Unknow vnkist, and lost that is vnsought
What many a man hath loue ful dere abouzt
Twenty winter that his lady ne wiste
That neuer yet his ladies mouthe he kiste

what

what, should he therfore fallen in dispaire:
Or be recreaunte for his owne tene
Or slain himself, all be his ladie faire
Naie naie: but euer in one be fresh and grene
To serue and loue, his dere hartes quene
And thinke it is a guerdone her to serue
A thousande parte more, than he can deserue

And of that worde tobe hede Troilus
And thought anone, what folie he was in
And how that sothe him saied Pandarus
That for to slaen himself, might he not win
But bothe doen vnmanhode and a sinne
And of his death his ladie nought to wite
For of his wo, God wot she knewe full lite.

And with that thought, he gã ful sore sike
And saied, alas: what is me best to doe
To whom Pandare saied, if thee like
The best is, that thou tell me thy wo
And haue my trouth, but if thou finde it so
I be thy bote, or it been full long
To peces doe me drawe, and sithen hong.

Ye, so saiest thou (q Troilus) alas:
But God wot it is naught the rather so
Full harde it were to helpen in this cas
For well finde I, that fortune is my fo
Ne all the men that ride con or go
Maie of her cruell whele the harme withstõd
For as her list, she plaieth with fre and bond.

(q Pandarus) than blamest thou fortune
For thou art wroth, ye now at erst I se
Wost thou not wel that fortune is commune
To euery maner wight, in some degre
And yet thou hast this comfort, lo parde
That as her ioies moten ouergone
So mote her sorowes passen euerichone:

For if her whele stint, any thing to tourne
Than cesseth she fortune anone to be
Now sith her whele by no waie maie sojourn
What wost thou of her mutabilite
Right as thy selfen lust woll doen by thee
Or that she be nought ferre fro thine helping
Parauenture thou hast cause for to sing.

And therfore wost thou what, I thee beseche
Let be thy wo, and tourning to the grounde
For who so liste haue healing of his leche
To him bihoueth first vnwrie his wounde
To Cerberus in hell aie be I bound
Were it for my suffer all thy sorowe
By my will she should be thine to morowe.

Loke vp I saie, and tell me what she is
Anone, that I maie gone about thy nede
Knowiche her aught, for my loue tel me this
Than would I hope rather for to spede
Tho gan the veine of Troilus to blede
For he was hit, and wore all redde for shame
Aha (q Pandara) here beginneth game.

And with that worde, he gan him for to shake
And saied these, thou shalt her name tell
But tho gan sely Troilous for to quake
As though men should han had him into hel
And saied alas, of all my wo the well
Than is my swete foe called Creseide
And well nigh w that word for feare he deide

And whan ẏ Pãdare heard her name neuen
Lorde he was glad, and saied, frend so dere
Now fare a right, for Joues name in heuen
Loue hath beset thee well, be of good chere
For of good name, and wisedom, and manere
She hath inough, and eke of gentillesse
If she be faire, thou wost thy self I gesse

Ne neuer sei a more bounteous
Of her estate, ne a gladder: ne of speache
A frendlier, ne more gracious
For to doe well, ne lasse had nede to seache
What for to doen, and all this bet to eche
In honour, to as ferre as she maie stretche
A kinges harte semeth by hers a wretche.

And for thy loke of good comforte thou be
For certainly the first pointe is this
Of noble corage, and wele ordaine the
A man to haue peace with him selfe i wis
So oughtest thou, for nought but good it is
To louen wel, and in a worthy place
The ought not clepe it happe, but grace

And also thinke, and therwith glad the
That sith thy lady vertuous is all
So followeth it, that there is some pite
Amonges all these other in generall
And for thei se that thou in speciall
Require nought, that is ayen her name
For vertue stretcheth not him selfe to shame

But wel is me, that euer I was borne
That thou beset art in so good a place
For by my trouth i loue I durst haue swore
The should neuer haue tidde so faire a grace
And wost ẏ why: for thou were wont to chace
At loue in scorne, and for dispite him call
Saint Idiote, lorde of these fooles all

How

How often hast thou made thy nice iapes
And saied, that loues seruauntes euerichone
Of nicete, been very Goddes Apes
And some would mouche her meate alone
Ligging a bedde, and make hem for to grone
And some thou saidest had a blaunche feuere
And praidest God, thei should neuer keuere.

And some of hem, toke on hem for the cold
More than inough, so saidest thou full oft
And some han fained oft time and tolde
How that thei waken, whan thei slepe soft
And thus thei would haue set hem self a loft
And natheless were vnder at the laste
Thus saidest thou, and iapedest full faste.

Yet saidest thou, that for the more part
These louers would speake in generall
And thoughten it was a siker art
For failing for to assaien ouer all
Now maie I iape of thee, if that I shall
But natheless, though that I should deie
Thou art none of tho, I dare well seie.

Now bete thy brest, and saie to God of loue
Thy grace Lorde, for now I me repent
If I misspake, for now my self I loue
Thus saie with all thine her, in good entent
(q Troilus) ah Lorde, I me consent
And praie to thee, my iapes thou forgeue
And I shall neuer more while I liue.

Thou saiest well (q Pãdare) & now I hope
That thou the Goddes wrath hast alapeased
And sithe thou hast wepten many a drope
And laid soch thing, wherw thy god is plesed
Now would neuer God, but thou were eased
And thinke well she, of whom rest all thy wo
Here after maie thy comfort been also.

For thilke ground, ỹ beareth ỹ wedes wicke
Beareth eke tiese holsome herbes, as full oft
Nexte the foule nettle, rough and thicke
The Rose wexeth, soote, smothe, and soft
And next the valey is the hill a loft
And next the derke night the glad morowe
And also ioie is next the line of sorowe.

Now looke that attempre be thy bridell
And for the best aie suffre to the tide
Or els all our labour is on idell
He hasteth well, that wisely can abide
Be diligent and true, and aie well hide
Be lustie, free, perseuer in thy seruise
And all is well, if thou werke in this wise.

But he that departed is in euery place
Is no where hole, as writen clerkes wise
What wonder is, if soche one haue no grace
Eke wost thou how it fareth of some seruice
As plant a tree or herbe, in sondrie wise
And on the morow we pull it vp as bliue
No wonder is, though it maie neuer thriue.

And sith ỹ God of loue hath thee bestowed
In place digne vnto thy worthinesse
Stonde fast, for to good port hast thou rowed
And of thy self, for any heuinesse
Hope alwaie well, for but if derinesse
Or ouer hast our bothe labour shende
I hope of this to maken a good ende.

And wost thou why, I am the lasse afered
Of this matter, with my nece trete
For this haue I heard saie of wise lered
Was neuer man or woman yet beyete
That was vnapt to suffre loues hete
Celestiall, or els loue of kinde
For thy some grace I hope in her to finde.

And for to speke of her in speciall
Her beaute to bethinken, and her youthe
It sit her nought, to been Celestiall
As yet, though that her list bothe and kouthe
And truely it sit her well right nouthe
A worthie knight to louen and cherice
And but she doe, I holde it for a vice.

Wherfore I am, and woll be aie redy
To pain me to doe you this seruice
For bothe you to please, this hope I
Here after, for ye been bothe wise
And con it counsaile kepe in soche a wise
That no man shall the wiser of it be
And so we maie been gladded all thre.

And by my trouth I haue right now of thee
T good conceit, in my wit as I gesse
And what it is, I woll now that thou se
I thinke that sithe Loue of his goodnesse
Hath thee conuerted out of wickednesse
That thou shalt been the best post I leue
Of all his laie, and moste his foes greue.

Enlample why, se now these great clerkes
That erren aldermoste ayen a lawe
And been conuerted from her wicked werkes
Through grace of God, ỹ lest hem to wdrawe
Thã arne thei folk that han most god in awe
And strengest faithed been I vnderstonde
And con an errour alderbest withstonde.

Whar

Whan Troilus had herde Pandare assented
To ben his helpe, in louing of Creseide
Wert of his wo, as who saith vnturmented
But hotter wert his loue, and than he saide
With sobre chere, as though his hart plaide
Now blisfull Venus helpe, er that I sterue
Of thee Pandare, I mow some thake deserue

But dere frende, how shal my wo be lesse
Til this be done, and good eke tell me this
How wilt thou saine of me and my distresse
Lest she be wroth, this drede I most i wis
Or wol not heren al, how it is
Al this drede I, and eke for the manere
Of the her Eme, she nil no suche thing here

(q Pandarus) thou hast a full great care
Lest the chorle may fal out of the moone
Why lorde: I hate of the the nice fare
Why, entremete of that thou hast doone
For goddes loue, I bid the a boone
So let me alone, and it shal be thy best
Why frende (q he) than done right as thee lest

But herke Pandare o worde, for I nolde
That thou in me wendest so great folie
That to my lady I deliren shoulde
That toucheth harme, or any vilanie
For dredelesse me were leuer die
Than she of me aught els vnderstood
But that, that might sownen in to good

Tho lough this Pandarus, & anon answerde
And I thy borow, fie no wight doth but so
I raught not though she stoode and herde
How that thou saiest, but farwel I wol go
A dieu, be glad, God spede vs both two
yeue me this labour, and this businesse
And of my spede, be thine al the swetnes

Tho Troilus gan doune on knees to fall
And Pandare in his armes hente fast
And saide, now fie on the Grekes all
Yet parde, God shal helpen at last
And dredelesse, if that my life may last
And God to borne, lo some of hem shal smerte
And yet me athinketh ỹ this auaũt masterte

Now Pandare, I can no more say
Thou wise, thou wost, thou maist, thou art al
My life, my death, hole in thine honde I lay
Helpe me now (q he) yes by my trouth I shal
God yelde the frende, and this in special
(q Troilus) that thou me recommaunde
To her that may me to the death cõmaunde

This Pandarus tho, desirous to serue
His ful frende, he saide in this manere
Farwel, and thinke I wol the thanke deserue
Haue here my trouth, & that thou shalt here
And went his way, thinking on this matere
And how he best might beseechen her of grace
And finde a time therto, and a place

For euery wight that hath a house to bond
He renneth nat the werke for to beginne
With rakel honde, but he wol bide a stound
And sende his hertes line out fro within
Alderfirst his purpose for to winne
Al thus Pandare in his hart thought
And cast his werke, full wisely er he wrought

But Troilus lay tho no lenger doun
But anon vpon his stede baie
And in the felde he plaied the loun
Wo was that greke, that with him met that daie
And in the toun, his maner tho for the aie
So goodly was, and gat him so in grace
That eche him loued, that loked in his face

For he became the frendliest wight
The gentilest, and eke the most fre
The thriftiest, and one the best knight
That in his time was, or might be
Deed were his iapes and his cruelte
His high porte, and his maner straunge
And eche of hem, gan for a vertue chaunge

Now let vs stint of Troilus a stounde
That fareth like a man, that hurt is sore
And is somdele of a king of his wounde
yfessed wel, but heled no dele more
And as an ealy pacient the lore
Abite: of him that goth about his cure
And thus he driueth forth his auenture.

Explicit liber primus.

Out of these blacke wawes for to saile
O winde, the weder ginneth clere
For in ỹ see, the bote hath such trauaile
Of my conning, that vnneth I it stere
This see clepe I the tempestous matere
Of dispaire, that Troilus was in
But now of hope the kalendes begin

O lady mine that called art Cleo
Thou be my spede fro this forthe, & my muse

To rime wel this boke til I haue do
Me nedeth here none other art to vse
For why, to euery louer I me excuse
That of no sentement I this endite
But out of latin, in my tonge it write

Wherfore I nil haue neither thãke ne blame
Of al this worke, but praie you mekely
Disblameth me if any worde be lame
For as mine auctour said, so say I
Eke though I speake of loue vnfelingly
No wonder is, for it nothinge of newe is
A blinde man can not iudgen wel in hewis

I know that in forme of speche is chaunge
Within a thousande yere, and wordes tho
That hadde prise, now wõder nice & straunge
Thinketh hem, and yet thei spake hem so
And spedde as wel in loue, as men now do
Eke for to winnen loue, in sondry ages
In sondry londes, sondry ben vsages

And for thy, if it happe in any wise
That here be any louer in this place
That herheneth, as the storie wol deuise
How we Troilus came to his ladies grace
And thinketh, so nolde I not loue purchace
Or wondreth on his speche or his doyng
I not, but it is to me no wondring

For euery wight, whiche that to Rome went
Hait nat o pathe, ne alway o manere
Eke in some londe were al the gamen shent
Yf that men sarde in loue, as men don here
As thus, in open doyng or in chere
In visiting, in forme, or said our sawes
For thy mẽ saine, eche coũtre hath his lawes

Eke scarsely ben there in this place thre
That haue in loue said like, and done in al
For to this purpose this maie liken the
And the right nought, yet al is done or shal
Eke some men graue in tre, some in stone wal
As it betide, but sith I haue begonne
Mine authour shall I folow, as I konne.

Explicit Prohemium.

IN May that mother is of monethes glade
That fresh flours, blew, white, and rede
Ben quiche ayen, that winter deed made
And full of baume is fleting euery mede
Whan Phebus doth her bright beames spred
Right in the white Bole, it so betidde
As I shal singe, on Maies day the thridde

That Pandarus for all his wise speche
Felte eke his parte of loues shottes kene
That coude he neuer so well of louing preche
It made his hewe a daie ful ofte grene
So hote it, that him till that daie a tene
In loue, for whiche in wo to bedde he went
And made er it were day full many a went

The swalow Proigne, with a sorowfull lay
Whã morow come, gã make her waimenting
Why she forshapen was, and euery lay
Pandare a bed, halfe in a slombering
Til she so nighe him made her waimenting
How Thereus gan forth her suster take
That with the noise of her he gan awake

And to call, and dresse him vp to rise
Remembring him, his arande was to done
From Troilus, and eke his great empryse
And cast, & knew in good plite was the mone
To done voiage, and toke his way full soone
Unto his neces paleis, there beside
Now Janus God of entre, thou him gide

Whan he was come vnto his neces place
Where is my lady, to her folke (q he)
And thei him tolde, and in forthe in gan pace
And founde two other ladies sit and she
Within a paued parlour, and they thre
Herden a maiden hem reden the geste
Of the siege of Thebes, while hem leste

(q Pandarus) madame God you se
With your boke, and al the companie
Eighe vncle mine, welcome iwis (q she)
And vp she rose, and by the honde in hie
She toke him fast, and said, this night thrie
To good mote it turne, of you I mette
And with ỹ word, she doun on benche him set

Ye nece, ye shul faren wel the bet
If God wol al this yere (q Pandarus)
But I am sory that I haue you let
To herken of your boke ye praisen thus
For goddes loue what saithe it, tel it vs
Is it of loue, or some good ye me lere
Uncle (q she) your maistresse is nat here

With that thei gonnen laugh, & tho she seide
This romaunce is of Thebes, that we rede
And we haue herd how ỹ king Laius deide

Through

Through Edippus his sonne, and al the dede
And here we stinten, at these letters rede
How the bilshop, as the boke can tell
Amphiorax, fill through the grounde to hell

(q Pandarus) al this know I my selue
And al thassiege of Thebes, and the care
For herof ben there maked bokes twelue
But let be this, and tell me how ye fare
Do way your barbe, and shew your face bare
Do way your boke, rise vp and let vs daunce
And let vs done to May some obseruaunce

Eighe, God forbid (q she) be ye mad
Is that a widowes life, so God you saue
By God ye maken me right sore adrad
ye bene so wilde, it semeth as ye raue
It sat me wel bet aie in a caue
To bide, and rede on holy saintes liues
Let maidens gon to daunce, & yonge wiues.

As euer thriue I (q this Pandarus)
yet coulde I tel a thing, to don you play
Now vncle dere (q she) tell it vs
For goddes loue, is than thassiege aweie
I am of Grekes ferde, so that I deie
Nay nay (q he) as euer mote I thriue
It is a thing wel bet than suche fiue

ye holy God (q she) what thing is that
what bet than suche liue: eighe nay iwis
For al this world, ne can I reden what
It should ben, some iape I trowe it is
And but your seluen tel vs what it is
My wit is for to arede it al to leene
As helpe me God, I not what that ye meene

And I your borow, ne neuer shal (q he)
This thing be tolde to you, as mote I thriue
And why vncle mine, why so (q she)
By God (q he) that wol I tel as bliue
For prouder woman is there none on liue
And ye it wiste, in al the toune of Troie
I iape nat, so euer haue I ioie

Tho gan she wondren more than before
A thousande folde, and doune her eien cast
For neuer sithe the time that she was bore
To knowen thing, desired she so fast
And with a sike, she said him at the last
Now vncle mine, I nil you not displese
Nor aske more, that may do you disese

So after this, with many wordes glade
And frendly tales, and with mery chere
Of this & that thei spekē, and gonnen wade
In many an vnhouth glad and depe matere
As frendes done, whan thei bethe isere
Til she gan aske him how Hector ferde
That was the tounes wall, and Grekes yerde

Ful wel I thanke it God, sayde Pandarus
Saue in his arme he hath a litle wounde
And eke his freshe brother Troilus
The wise worthy Hector the secounde
In whom that euery vertue list habounde
As al trouthe, and al gentillesse
Wisedome, honour, fredome, and worthinesse

In good faith eme (q she) that liketh me
Thei faren wel, God saue hem bothe two
For trewliche, I holde it great deinte
A kinges sonne in armes wel to do
And be of good condicions therto
For great power, and moral vertue here
As selde isene in one persone ifere

In good faith that is sothe (q Pandarus)
But by my trouth, the king hath sōnes twey
That is to meane, Hector and Troilus
That certainly though that I should dey
Thei ben as voide of vices, dare I sey
As any men that liuen vnder sonne
Her might is wide iknow, & what thei conne

Of Hector nedeth it no more for to tel
In all this worlde, there nis a better knight
Than he that is of worthinesse the wel
And he wel more vertue hath than might
This knoweth many a wise & worthy knight
The same prise of Troilus I sey
God helpe me so, I know not suche twey

By God (q she) of Hector that is sothe
Of Troilus the same thing trowe I
For drede lesse, men telleth that he dothe
In armes day by day, so worthely
And beareth him here at home so gently
To euery wight, that al prise hath he
Of hem that me were leuest praised be

ye say right sothe iwis (q Pandarus)
For yesterday, who so had with him ben
Might haue wondred vpon Troilus
For neuer yet so thicke a swarme of been
He slewe, as Grekes from him ganne fleen
And through the felde in euery wightes eers
There was no crie, but Troilus is there

Now here, now there, he hunted hem so fast

There nas but Grekes blode, and Troilus
Nowe him he hurt, and him al doun he cast
Alle were he went it was araied thus
He was her death, and helde and life for vs
That as ỳ day ther durst him non withstõde
While ỳ he held his blody swerde in honde

Therto he is the frendelist man
Of great estate, that euer I sawe my liue
And where him lisse, best felowship can
To suche as him thinketh able for to thriue
And with that word, tho Pandarus as blyue
He tok his leaue, and said I wol gon hen
Nay, blame haue I vncle (q̃ she then)

what eileth you to be thus wery soone
And namelich of women, wot ye for?
Nay sitteth doune, by God I haue to done
With you, to speke of wisdome er ye go
And euery wight that was about hem tho
That herde that, gan ferre awaie to stonde
While thei two had al that him lisse in honde

Whan ỳ her tale al brought was to an ende
Of her estate, and of her gouernaunce
(q̃ Pandarus) now time is that I wende
But yet I say, ariseth let vs daunce
And caste your widowes habite to mischaũce
What lisse you thus your selfe to disfigure
Sithe you is tidde so glad an auenture

But wel bethought, for loue of God (q̃ she)
Shal I nat weten what ye meane of this
No, this thing alketh leaser tho (q̃ he)
And eke me would muche greue i wis
If I it tolde, and ye it toke amis
yet were it bette my tonge to holde stil
Than say a sothe, that were aienst your wil

For nece by the goddesse Minerue
And Jupiter, that maketh the thonder ring
And the blisful Venus, that I serue
Ye ben the woman in this world liuing
Withouten paramours, to my weting
That I best loue, and lothest am to greue
And that ye weten wel your selfe I leue

I wis mine vncle (q̃ she) graunt mercy
Your frendship haue I founden euer yet
I am to no man holden trewly
So muche as you, and haue so litel quit
And with the grace of God, emforth my wit
As in my gilte, I shal you neuer offende
And if I haue er this I wol amende

But for the loue of God, I you beseche
As ye be he, that I loue most and triste
Let be to me you fremed maner speche
And saie to me your nece, what you list
And with that worde, her vncle anon her kist
And said, gladly my leue nece dere
Take it for good, that I shal say you here

with that, she gan her eien doune to caste
And Pandarus to coughe gan alite
And saide: Nece alway lo, to the laste
How so it be, that some men hem delite
With subtel art her tales for tendite
Yet for al that in her entencion
Her tale is all for some conclusion

And sithe thende is euery tales strength
And this mater is so beholden
What should I paint or drawen it on length
To you that ben my frende so faithfully
And with that worde he gan right inwardly
Beholden her, and loken in her face
And saide, on suche a mirrour good grace

Than thought he thus, if I my tale endite
Aught harde, or make a processe any while,
She shal no sauour haue therin but lite
And trowe I would her in my wil begile
For tender wittes wenen al be while
Wher as thei con nat plainliche vnderstond
For thy her wit to seruen wol I fonde

And loked on her in a bely wise
And she was ware that he beheldе her so
Ah lorde (q̃ she) so false ye me auise
Sawe ye me neuer er now, what say ye no
Yes yes (q̃ he) and bet wol er I go
But by my trouth I thought nowe, if ye
Be fortunate, for now men shal it se

For euery wight, some goodly auenture
Somtime is shape, if he it can receiuen
But if he nil take of it no cure
When that it cometh, but wilfully it weiuen
Lo, neither cale, nor fortune him deceiuen
But right his own slouth and wretchednesse
And suche a wight is for to blame I gesse

Good auenture, O belle nece haue ye
Ful lightly founden, and ye conne it take
And for the loue of God, and eke of me
Catche it anone, lest auenture slake
What should I lenger processe of it make
yeue me your hond for in this world is non
If that you list a wight so wel begon

And

And tithe I speke of good entencioun
As I to you haue tolde wel here beforne
And loue as wel your honour and renoun
As any creature in al the world iborne
By al the othes that I haue you sworne
And ye be wrothe therfore or wene I lie
Ne shal I neuer sene you efte with eie

Beth nat agaste, ne quaketh nat, wherto
Ne chaunge nat for fere so your hewe
For hardely the worste of this is do
And though my tale as now be to you newe
yet trust alwaie, ye shal me finde trewe
And were it thing that me thought vnfitting
To you would I no suche tales bring

Nowe my good eme, for goddes loue I pray
(q she) come of and tel me what it is
For bothe I am agast what ye wol say
And eke me longeth it to wit iwis
For whether it be wel, or be amis
Say on, let me not in this feare dwel
So wol I done, now herbeneth I shal tel

Now nece mine, the kinges dere sonne
The good wise worthy, freshe and fre
Whiche alway for to done wel is his wonne
The noble Troilus so loueth the
That but ye helpe it wol his bane be
Lo here is al, what should I more sey
Doth what you list, to make him liue or die

But if ye let him dye, I wol seruen
Haue here my trouth, nece I nil not lien
Al should I with this knife my throte kerue
With that the teeres burst out of his eyen
And saide, if that ye done vs both dien
Thus giltlesse, than haue ye fished faire
What mende ye, though ỹ we bothe apaire

Alas, he whiche that is my lorde so dere
That trewe man, that noble gentle knight
That naught destreth, but your frendly chere
I se him dien, there he goth vpright
And hasteth him, with al his ful might
For to ben slaine, if his fortune assente
Alas that God you suche a beaute sente

If it be so that ye so cruel be
That of his deth you listeth nought to retch
That is so trewe and worthy, as we se
No more than of a iaper or a wretch
If ye be suche, your beaute may nat stretch
To make amendes of so cruell a dede
Iuisement is good before the nede

Wo worthe the faire Gemme vertueles
Wo worth that herbe also that doth no bote
Wo worth the beaute that is routheles
Wo worth that wight trede eche vnder fote
And ye that ben of beaute croppe and rote
If therwithal in you ne be no routhe
Than is harme ye leuen by my trouthe

And also thinke wel, that this is no gaude
For me were leuer, thou, I and he
Were honged, than I should ben his baude
As high as men might on vs al se
I am thine Eme, the shame were to me
As wel as the, if that I should assent
Through mine abet, ỹ he thine honour shent

Now vnderstonde, for I you nought requere
To binde you to him, through no beheste
Saue onely that ye make him better cheere
Than ye han don er this, and more feste
So that his life be saued at the leste
This al and some, and plainly our entente
God helpe me so, I neuer other mente

Lo, this request is nought but skil iwis
Ne doute of reason parde is there none
I set the worste, that ye dreden this
Men would wonder to sene him come & gone
Ther ayenst answere I thus anone
That euery wight, but he be foole of kinde
Wol deme it loue of frendship in his minde

What, who wol demen though he se a man
To temple gon, that he the images eeteth
Thinke eke, howe wel and wisely that he can
Gouerne himselfe, that he nothing forgeteth
that wher he cometh, he prys & thōk hī geteth
And eke therto he shal come here so selde
What force were it, thouz al the toun beheldе

Suche loue of frēdes reigneth al this toun
And wrie you in that mantel euermo
And God so wis be my saluacioun
As I haue saide, your best is to do so
But good nece, alway to stint his wo
So let your daunger, sugred ben alite
That of his death, ye be not al to wite

Creseide, which that herde him in this wise
Thought, I shal telen what he meaneth iwis
Now Eme (q she) what would ye deuise?
what is your rede, I should done of this?
That is wel said q he, certaine best is
That ye him loue aien for his louing
As loue for loue, is skilful guerdoning

Thinke eke how elde wasteth euery hour
In eche of you, a part of beaute
And therfore, er that age the deuour
Go loue, for olde there woll no wight of the
Let this prouerbe, a lore vnto you be
To late iware, ꝙ beaute, whan it paste
And elde daunteth daunger, at the laste

The kinges foole is wont to crie loude
Whā ẏ he thinketh a woman bereth her hie
So longe mote ye liue, and all proude
Til Crowes fete growe vnder your eie
And sende you than a mirrour in to prie
In which that ye may se your face a morowe
Nece, I bid wishe you no more sorowe

With this he stinte, and cast doune the heed
And she began to brest and wepe anone
And saide, alas for wo, why nere I deed
For of this world, the faith is al agone
Alas, what shulden straunge vnto me done
When he that for my best frende I wende
Rate me to loue, and should it me defende

Alas, I would haue trusted doutles
That if that I, through my disauenture
Had loued either him, or Achiles
Hector, or any other creature
Ye nolde haue had mercy ne mesure
On me, but al waie had me in repreue
This false worlde alas, who may it leue

What? is this al the ioy and al the feest?
Is this your rede? is this my blisful caas
Is this the very mede of your beheest?
Is al this painted processe said (alas)
Right for this sine, O lady mine Pallas
Thou in this dredeful case for me puruey
For so astonied am I, that I dey

With that she gan ful sorowfully to sike
Ne may it be no bet (ꝙ Pandarus)
By God I shall no more come here this weke
And God to forne, that am mistrusted thus
I se wel now, ye setten light of vs
Or of our death alas, I woful wreche
Might he yet liue, of me were nouzt to reche

O cruel God, o dispitous Marte
O furies thre of hel, on you I crie
So let me neuer out of this house departe
Yf that I ment harme or vilanie
But sithe I se my Lorde mote nedes die
And I with him, here I me shriue and fey
That wickedly ye done vs bothe dey

But sithe it liketh you, that I be deed
By Neptunus that God is of the see
Fro this forthe shal I neuer eeten breed
Til I mine owne herte bloode maie see
For certaine I wol die, as soone as he
And vp he sterte, and on his waie he raught
Til she againe him by the lappe caught

Creseide, which that wel nigh starfe for feare
So as she was the ferfullest wight
That might be, and herde eke with her eere
And sawe the sorowful ernest of the knight
And in his praier sawe eke non vnright
And for the harme eke that might fal more
She gan to rewe, & dredde her wonder sore

And thought thus, vnhappes fallen thicke
Alday for Loue, and in suche maner caas
As men ben cruell in hem selfe and wicke
And if this man slee here him selfe, alas
In my presence, it nil be no solas
What men would of it deme, I can nat say
It nedeth me full slighly for to play

And with a sorowful sigh, she saide thrie
Ah lorde, what me is tidde a sory chaunce
For mine estate lieth in a ieopardie
And eke mine emes life lieth in balaunce
But nathelesse, with goddes gouernaunce
I shal so done, mine honour shal I kepe
And eke his life, and stint for to wepe

Of harmes two, the lesse is for to chese
Yet had I leuer maken him good chere
In honour, than mine emes life to lese
Ye saine ye nothing els me requere?
No wis (ꝙ he) mine owne nece dere:
Now wel (ꝙ she, and I wol don my paine
I shal mine herte ayen my lust constraine

But that I nil nat holden him in honde
Ne loue a man, that can I naught ne may
Ayenst my wil, but els wol I fonde
Mine honour saue, plesen him fro day to day
Therto nolde I not ones haue saide nay
But that I dredde, as in my fantasie
But cesse cause, aie cesseth maladie

But here I make a protestacion
That in this processe if ye deper go
That certainly, for no saluacion
Of you, though that ye steruen bothe two
Though al the worlde on o day be my fo
Ne shal I neuer on him haue other routhe
I graunt wel (ꝙ Pandare by my trouthe

But

But maie I trust well to you (q he)
That of this thing that ye han hight me here
Ye woll it holde truely vnto me
ye doubtlesse (q she) mine vncle dere
Ne that I shall haue cause in this matere
(q he) to plain, or offer you to preache
why no parde, what nedeth more speache.

Tho till thei in other tales glade
Till at the last, o good eme (q she tho)
For loue of God whiche ye that vs bothe made
Till me how first ye wisten of his wo
Wot non of it but ye, he saied no
Can he well speake of loue (q she) I preie
Tell me, for I the bet shall me purueie.

Tho Pandarus alite gan to smile
And saied: By my trouth I shall now tell
This other daie, nat gon full long while
Within the paleis gardin by a well
Gan he and I, well halfe a daie to dwell
Right for to speaken of an ordinaunce
How we the Grekes mighten disauaunce.

Sone after that we gone for to lepe
And casten with our dartes to and fro
Till at the last, he saied, he would slepe
And on the grasse adoune, he laied him tho
And I after gan to romen, to and fro
Till that I heard, as I walked alone
How he began, full wofully to grone.

Tho gan I stalke him softly behinde
And sikerly the sothe for to saine
As I can clepe ayen now to my minde
Right thus to loue, he gan him for to plain
He saied: lorde, haue routh vpon my pain
All haue I been rebell in mine entent
Now (Mea culpa) Lorde I me repent.

O God, that at thy disposicion
Ledest the line, by iust purueiaunce
Of euery wight, my lowe confession
Accept in gree, and sende me soche penaunce
As liketh thee, but from me diseseraunce
That maie my ghost departe alwaie fro the
Thou be my shilde, for thy benignite.

For certes lorde, so sore hath she me wounded
That stode in blache, with loking of her yen
That to mine hartes botome it is ifounded
Through which I wot, that I must nedes dien
This is the worst, I dare me nought bewrien
And well the hoter been the gledes rede
That men hem wrien with ashen pale & dede.

With that he smote his hedde adoune anone
And gan to muttre, I nat what truely
And I with that gan still awaie to gone
And lete thereof, as nothing wist had I
And come again anon and stode him by
And saied awake, ye slepen all to long
It semeth nought that loue doth you wrong

That slepen so, that no man maie you wake
Who seie euer er this so dull a man
Ye frende (q he) doe ye your heddes ake
For loue, and let me liuen as I can
But lorde that he for wo was pale and wan
Yet made he tho as freshe a countenaunce
As though he should haue led ỹ newe daunce

This passed forth, till now this other daie
It fell that I come toming all alone
Into his chambre, & founde how that he laie
Upon his bedde: but man so sore grone
Ne heard I neuer, and what was his mone
Ne wist I nought, for as I was comming
All sodainly, he left his complaining.

Of whiche I toke somwhat suspection
And nere I come, and founde him wepe sore
And God so wise be my saluacion
As neuer of thing had I no routh more
For neither with engine, ne with no lore
Unnethes might I fro the death him kepe
That yet sele I mine harte for him wepe.

And God wot neuer sith that I was borne
Was I so busie no man for to preache
Ne neuer was to wight, so depe swore
Er he me told, who might been his leache
But not to you rehearsen all his speache
Or all his wofull wordes for to sowne
Ne bid me nought, but ye woll se me swone.

But for to saue his life, and els nought
And to non harme of you, thus am I driuen
And for the loue of God that vs hath wrought
Soche chere him doth, ỹ he and I maie liuen
Now haue I plat to you mine harte shriuen
And sith ye wote that mine entent is cleane
Take hede thereof, for none euill I meane.

And right good thrift, I pray to God haue ye
That han soche one icaught withouten net
And be ye wise, as ye be faire to se
Well in the ring, than is the Rubie set
There were neuer two so well imet
Whan ye been his all hole, as he is your
There mightie god yet graunt vs to se ỹ hour

Naie thereof spake I nat: A ha (q̃ she)
As helpe me God, ye shenden euery oele
A mercie dere nece, anon (q̃ he)
What so I spake, I ment nought but wele
By Mars the God, that helmed is of stele
Now beth not wroth, my blood, my nece dere
Now well (q̃ she) foryeuen be it here.

With this he toke his leaue, and home he wēt
Ye Lorde how he was glad, and well bigon
Creseide arose, no lenger she ne stent
But streight into her closet went anon
And set her doune, as still as any stone
And euery worde gan vp and doune to winde
That he had saied, as it came her to minde.

And woxe somedele astonied in her thought
Right for the newe case, but whan that she
Was full auised, tho found she right nought
Of perill, why that she ought aferde be
For man maie loue of possibilite
A woman so, his harte maie to brest
And she nat loue ayen, but if her lest.

But as she sat alone, and thought thus
Thascrie arose at skarmoche all without
And men cried in the strete, se Troilus
Hath right now put to flight ẏ Grekes rout
With that gonne all her meine for to shout
A, go we se, cast vp the gates wide
For throuz this strete he mote to paleis ride.

For other waie is fro the yates none
Of Dardanus there open is the cheine
With that come he, and all his folke anone
An easie pace riding, in routes tweine
Right his happie daie was sothe to seine
For whiche men saith maie not distourbed be
That shall betide of necessite.

This Troilus sat on his baie stede
All armed saue his hedde, full richely
And wounded was his horse, & gan to blede
On whiche he rode a pace full softly
But soche a knightly sight truely
As was on him, was nat withouten faile
To loke on Mars, that God is of battaile.

So like a man of armes, and a knight
He was to seen, fulfilled of high prowesse
For bothe he had a bodie, and might
To doen that thing, as well as hardinesse
And eke to seen him in his geare dresse
So freshe, so yong, so weldy semed he
It was an heauen vpon him for to se:

His helme to heuen was in twentie places
That by a tissue hong, his backe behinde
His shelde to dashed w̃ swerdes a with maces
In whiche men might many an arowe finde
That thirled had horne, nerfe, and rinde
And aie the people cried, here cometh ourioie
And next his brother, holder vp of Troie.

For which he wext a little redde for shame
When he so heard the people vpon him crien
That to beholde, it was noble game
How soberliche he cast a doune his iyen
Creseide anone gan all his chere espien
And let it so soft in her harte sinke
That to her self she said, who yaue me drinke

For all her own thought, she woxe al redde
Remembring her right thus, lo this is he
Whiche ẏ mine vncle swereth he mote dedde
But I on him haue mercie and pite
And with that thought, for pure ashamed she
Gan in her hedde to pull, and that as fast
While he and all the people forth by past.

And gan to cast, and rollen vp and doun
Within her thought his excellent prowesse
And his estate, and also his renoun
His witte, his shape, and eke his gentilnesse
But moste her fauour was, for his distresse
Was all for her, and thought it were a routh
To slaen soche one, if that he ment trouth.

Now might some enuious iangle thus
This was a sodain loue, how might it be
That she so lightly loued Troilus
Right for the first sight: ye parde
Now who so saied so, mote he neuer thee
For euery thing, a ginning hath it nede
Er all be wrought, withouten any drede.

For I saie nat that she so sodainly
Yafe him her loue, but that she gan encline
To liken him tho, and I haue told you why
And after that, his manhode and his pine
Made that loue within her gan to mine
For whiche by processe, and by good seruice
He wanne her loue, and in no sodain wise.

And all so blisful Venus wele arayed
Satte in her seuenth house of heuen tho
Disposed wele, and with aspectes payed
To helpe sely Troylus of hys wo
And sothe to sayne, she nas nat all a foe
To Troylus, in hys natyuyte
God wote, that wele the sooner sped he

Now

Now let vs stente of Troilus a throwe
That rideth forth, and let vs tourne fast
Unto Creseide, that heng her hedde full lowe
There as she satte alone, and gan to cast
Whereon she would apoinct her at the last
If it so were, her Eme ne would cesse
For Troilus, vpon her for to presse.

And lorde so she gan in her thought argue
In this matter, of whiche I haue you told
And what to doen best where, & what eschue
That plited she full oft in many fold
Now was her hart warme, now was it cold
And what she thought, somwhat shal I write
As mine aucthour listeth for tendite.

She thought first, that Troilus person
She knewe by sight, and eke his gentelnesse
And thus she said, all were it nought to doen
To graunt him loue, yet for his worthinesse
It wer honor with plaie, and with gladnesse
In honeste, with soche a Lorde to deale
For mine estate, and also for his heale.

Eke well wote I, my kinges sonne is he
And sith he hath to se me soche delite
If I would vtterliche his sight flie
Parauenture he might haue me in dispite
Through which I might stond in wors plite
Now were I wise, me hate to purchase
Without nede, there I maie stande in grace.

In euery thing, I wot there lieth measure
For though a man forbid dronkenesse
He nought forbiddeth that euery creature
Be drinkelesse for alwaie as I gesse
Eke sithe I wot for me is his distresse
I ne ought not for that thing him dispise
Sith it is so, he meaneth in good wise.

And eke I knowe, of long time agone
His thewes good, and that he nis not nice
No vauntour saine men, certain he is none
To wise is he, to doen so greate a vice
Ne als I nill him neuer so cherice
That he shall make auaunt by iust cause
He shall me neuer binde in soche a clause.

Now set I case, the hardest is i wis
Men might demen that he loueth me
What dishonour were it vnto me this?
Maie iche him let of that, why naie parde?
I knowe also, and alwaie here and se
Men louen women all this toune about
Be thei the wers? Why naie without doubt?

I thinke eke how, he worthie is to haue
Of all this noble toune the thriftiest
That women is, if she her honour saue
For out and out he is the worthiest
Saue onely Hector, whiche that is the best
And yet his life lieth all now in my cure
But soche is loue, and eke mine auenture.

Ne me to loue, a wonder is it nought
For well wote I my self, so God me spede
All woll I that none wist of this thought
I am one the fairest out of drede
And goodliest, who so that taketh hede
And so men saine in all the toune of Troie
What wonder is: though he of me haue ioie.

I am mine owne woman well at ease
I thanke it God, as after mine estate
Right yong, and stond vntied in lustie lease
Withouten ielousie, and soche debate
Shall no husbonde saine to me checke mate
For either thei been full of ielousie
Or maisterfull, or louen nouelrie.

What shall I doen? to what fine liue I thus?
Shall I not loue, in case if that me lest?
What pardieux I am not religious
And though that I mine harte set at rest
Vpon this knight, that is the worthiest
And kepe alwaie mine honor, and my name
By all right it maie doe me no shame.

But right as whan the sunne shineth bright
In March, that chaungeth oft time his face
And that a cloud is put with winde to flight
Whiche ouersprat the Sunne, as for a space
A cloudy thought gan through her soul pace
That ouerspradde her bright thoughtes all
So that for feare almoste she gan to fall.

That thouzt was this: alas sith I am free
Should I now loue, and put in ieopardie
My sikernesse, and thrallen libertie
Alas, how durst I thinken that folie?
Maie I not well in other folke aspie
Her dredfull ioie, her constreint, and her pain
Ther loueth non, ẏ she ne hath waie to plain

For loue is yet the moste stormie life
Right of himself, that euer was begonne
For euer some mistrust, or nice strife
There is in loue, some cloud ouer the Sunne
Thereto we wretched women nothing conne
Whan vs is wo, but wepe and sit and thinke
Our wretche is this, our owne wo to drinke.

Also wicked tongues been so prest
To speake vs harme, ebe men been so vntrue
That right anon as cessed is her lest
So cesseth loue, and sorth to loue a newe
But harme idoe is doen, who so it rue
For thouz these men for loue hem first to rēde
Full sharpe beginning breaketh oft at ende.

How oft time maie men rede and seen
The treason, that to women hath be doe
To what fine is soche loue, I can not seen
Oz where becometh it, whan it is go
There is no wight that wote, I trowe so
Wher it becometh, lo, no wight on it spozneth
That erst was nothing, into naught turneth

How busie (if I loue) ehe must I be
To plesen hem, that iangle of loue, & demen
And coyen hem, that thei saie no harm of me
For though there be no cause, yet hem semen
Al be for harme, that folke her frēdes quemen
And who maie stoppen euery wicked tong:
Oz soune of belles, while that thei been rōg:

And after that her thought gan for to clere
And saied, he whiche ẏ nothing vndertaketh
Nothing acheueth, be him lothe oz dere
And with an other thought her hart quaketh
Than slepeth hope, and after drede awaketh
Now hote now cold, but thus bitwixen twey
She rist her vp, and went her for to pley.

Adoune the staire, anon right tho she went
Into her gardine, with her neces three
And vp and doun, thei maiden many a went
Flexippe and she, Tarbe, and Antigone
To plaien, that it ioie was to see
And other of her women a greate rout
Her folowed in the gardine all about.

This yerde was large, and railed al the alies
And shadowed wel, wᵗʰ blosomy bowes grene
And benched newe, and sonded all the waies
In which she walketh arme in arme betwen
Till at the last Antigone the shene
Gan on an Troian song to singen clere
That it an heuen was, her voice to here.

She saied: O loue, to whom I haue, & shal
Been humble subiect, true in mine entent
As I best can, to you Lorde yeue iche all
For euermoze mine hartes lust to rent
For neuer yet thy grace no wight sent
So blisfull cause as me, my life to lede
In all ioie and suretie, out of drede.

The blisfull God, hath me so well beset
In loue iwis, that all that beareth life
Imaginen ne could how to be bet
For Lorde withouten ielousie oz strife
I loue one, whiche that moste is ententife
To seruen well, vnwerily oz vnfained
That euer was, & lest with harme distained.

As he that is the well of worthinesse
Of trouth grouūd, mirrour of goodlyheedd
Of wit Apollo, stone of sikernesse
Of vertue roote, of iuste tinder and heedde
Thzough whiche is all sozowe fro my dedde
Iwis I loue him best, so doeth he me
Now good thzift haue he, where so euer he b

whom should I thanken but you God of lou
Of all this blisse, in whiche to bathe I ginn
And thanked be ye Lorde, for that I loue
This is the right life that I am inne
To flemen all maner vice and sinne
This doeth me so to vertue for to entende
That daie by daie I in my will amende.

And who that saieth that for to loue is vic
Oz thzaldome, though he fele in it distresse
He either is enuious, oz right nice
Oz is vnmightie for his shzewdnesse
To louen, for soche maner folke I gesse
Diffamen loue, as nothing of him knowe
Thei speaken, but thei vent neuer his bowe.

what is the Sunne worse of kinde right:
Though that a man, for feblenesse of his yen
Maie not endure on it to se for bright
Oz loue the worse, that wzetches on it crien
No wele is worth, that maie no sozowe dzien
And for thy, who that hath an hedde of verre
Fro cast of stones ware him in the werre.

But I with all mine harte, & al my might
As I haue saied, woll loue vnto my last
My dere harte, and all mine owne knight
In whiche mine harte growen is so fast
And is in me, that it shall euer last
All dzedde I first loue him to begin
Now wote I well there is no perill in.

And of her song right with ẏ worde she stent
And therewithall, now nece (qᵈ Creseide)
Who made this song, now wᵗʰ so good entent
Antigone answerde anon, and saide
Madame iwis the goodliest maide
Of greate estate in all toune of Troie
And led her life in moste honour and ioie.

Forsothe

Forsothe so semeth it by her song
ꝑ tho Creseide, and gan therwith to sike
And saied: Lorde, is there soche blisse emong
These louers, as thei can faire endite
Ye wisse ꝙ freshe Antigone the white
For all the folke that haue or been on liue
Ne con well the blisse of loue discriue.

But wene ye that euery wretche wote
The parfite blisse of loue, why naie iwis
Thei wenen all be loue, if one be hote
Dowaie dowaie, thei wote nothing of this
Men mote asken of sainctes, if it is
Ought faire in heuen, & why? for thei can tell
And aske fendes, if it be foule in hell.

Creseide vnto ẏ purpose naught answerde
But saied, iwis it woll be night as faste
But euery worde, which that she of her herde
She gan to printen in her harte faste
And aie gan loue her lasse for to agaste
Than it did erst, and sinken in her harte
That she waxe somwhat able to conuarte.

The daies honour, and the heauens iye
The nightes foe, all this clepe I thee sonne
Gan westren fast, and doun ward for to wrie
As he that had his daies course ironne
And white thinges worē dimme and donne
For lacke of light, and sterres for to apere
That she and all her folke in went ifere.

So whan it liked her to gon to reste
And voided weren thei that voiden ought
She saied, that to slepen well her leste
Her women sone till her bedde her brought
Whan al was hust, than laie she stil & thouzt
Of all this thing the maner and the wise
Rehearce it nedeth not, for ye been wise.

A Nightingale vpon a Cedre grene
Under the chamber wall, there as she laie
Full loude song ayen the Mone shene
Parauenture in his birdes wise a laie
Of loue, that made her harte freshe and gaie
That herkened she so long in good entent
Till at the last the dedde slepe her hent.

And as she slept, anon right tho her met
How that an Egle fethered white as bone
Under her brest his long clawes set
And out her harte he rent, and that anon
And did his harte into her brest to gon
Of which she nouzt agrose, ne nothing smart
And forthe he flieth, with harte left for hart.

Now let her slepe, and we our tales holde
Of Troilus, that is to Paleis ridden
Fro the scarmishe of whiche I tolde
And in his chamber sate, and hath abidden
Till two or thre of his messangers yeden
For Pandarus, and soughten him full fast
Til thei him found, & brought him at the last.

This Pandarus came leaping in at ones
And saied thus, who hath been well ibete
To daie with swerdes, and slong stones
But Troilus, that hath caught him an hete
And gan to iape, and saied, Lorde ye swete
But rise and let vs soupe, and go to reste
And he answerde him, doe we as thee leste.

With all the hast goodlie as thei might
Thei sped hem fro the souper, and to bedde
And euery wight out at the doore him dight
And whider him list, vpon his waie him sped
But Troilus thought that his harte bledde
For wo, till that he heard some tiding
And saied frende, shall I now wepe or sing.

(ꝙ Pandarus) be still and let me slepe
And doe on thy hoode, thine nedes spedde be
And chese if thou wolt sing, daunce, or lepe
At short wordes thou shalt trowe me
Sir, my nece woll doen well by thee
And loue thee best, by God and by trothe
But lacke of pursute make it in thy slothe.

For thus ferforth I haue thy werke begon
Fro daie to daie, till this daie by the morowe
Her loue of frendship haue I to thee won
And therfore hath she laid her faith to borow
Algate a foote is hameled of thy sorowe
What should I lenger sermon of it holde
As ye haue heard before, all he him tolde.

But right as floures throuz the cold of night
I closed, stoupen in her stalkes lowe
Redressen hem ayen the Sunne bright
And spreden in her kinde course by rowe
Right so gan tho his iyen vp to throwe
This Troilus, and saied: O Uenus dere
Thy might, thy grace, iheried be it here.

And to Pandarus he held vp bothe his hōdes
And saied, Lorde all thine be that I haue
For I am hole, and brosten been my bondes
A thousande Troies, who so that me yaue
Eche after other, God so wis me saue
Ne might me so gladen, lo mine harte
It spredeth so for ioie it woll to starte.

But

But lorde how shall I doen how shall I liue
Whan shall I nere my dere harte se?
How shall this long time awaie be driuen
Till that thou be ayen at her fro me
Thou maiest answere, abide abide: but he
That hangeth by the necke, sothe to saine
In greate disease abideth for the paine.

All easely now, for the loue of Marte
(q Pandarus) for euery thing hath time
So long abide, till that the night departe
For also sikerr as thou liest here by me
And God to forme, I woll be there at prime
And for thy werke som what, as I shall saie
Or on some other wight this charge laie.

For parde God wot, I haue euer yet
Been redy thee to serue, and this night
Haue I not fained, but emfor the my wit
Doen all thy lust, and shal with al my might
Doe now as I shall saine, and fare aright
And if thou nilte, wite all thy self the care
On me is nought along thine euill fare.

I wote well that thou wiser art than I
A thousande folde: but if I were as thou
God helpe me so, as I would otterly
Right of mine owne honde write her now
A letter, in whiche I would her tellen how
I farde a misse, and her beseche of routh
Now helpe thy self, and leaue it for no slouth

And I my self shall therwith to her gon
And whā thou wost that I am with her there
Worthe thou vp on a courser right anon
Ye hardely, right in thy best gere
And ride forth by ꝑ place, as naught ne were
And thou shalt finde vs (if I maie sitting
At some windowe, into the strete loking.

And if thee list, than maiest thou vs salue
And vpon me make thou thy countenaunce
But by thy life beware, and fast eschue
To tarien ought, god shild vs fro mischaunce
Ride forth thy waie, & hold thy gouernaunce
And we shall speake of thee somwhat I trow
Whan thou art gon, to doe thine eares glow.

Touching thy letter thou are wise inough
I wot thou nilte it deigneliche endite
As make it with these argumentes tough
Ne scriuenische or craftely thou it write
Beblotte it with thy teares ek alite
And if thou write a goodly worde all soft
Though it be good, rehearce it now to oft.

For though the best Harpour vpon liue
Would on the best sowned toily Harpe
That euer was, with all his fingers liue
Touche aie o string, or aie o warble Harpe
Where his nailes poincted neuer so sharpe
It should make euery wight to dull
To heare his glee, and of his strokes full.

Ne tombre eke no discordaunt thing i fere
As thus, to vsen termes of Physike
In loues termes holde of thy matere
The forme alwaie, and doe that it be like
For if a peinter would painte a pike
With Asses feete, and hedded as an Ape
It cordeth not, so were it but a iape.

This counsaile liked well vnto Troilus
But as a dredfull louer, he saied this
Alas my dere brother Pandarus
I am ashamed for to write i wis
Lest of mine innocence I saied amis
Or that she nolde it for dispite receiue
Thā wer I ded, there mizt it nothing weiue.

To that Pandare answerde, if thee lest
Doe that I saie, and let me therewith gon
For by that Lorde that formed East and West
I hope of it to bring answere anon
Right of her hond, and if that thou nilte non
Let be, and sorie mote he been his liue
Ayenst thy lust, that helpeth thee to thriue.

(q Troilus) depardieux iche assent
Sithe that thee list, I woll arise and write
And blisfull God praie iche with good entent
The viage and the letter I shall endite
So spede it, and thou Minerua the white
Yeue thou me witte, my letter to deuise
And set him doun, & wrote right in this wise

First he gan her his right Ladie call
His hartes life, his lust, his sorowes leche
His blisse, and eche these other termes all
That in soche case ye louers all seche
And in full humble wise, as in his speche
He gan him recommaunde vnto her grace
To tell all how, it asketh moell space.

And after this full lowly he her praied
To be nought wrothe, though he of his folie
So hardie was to her to write, and saied
That loue it made, or els must he die
And pitously gan mercie for to crie
And after that he saied, and lied full loude
Himself was little worthe, and lasse he coud.

And

And that she would haue his cõming excused
That litel was, and eke he dradde her so
And his vnworthinesse aie he acused
And after that than gan he tel his wo
But that was endelesse withouten ho
And said, he wold in trouth alway him holde
And redde it ouer, and gan the lettre folde

And with his salte teeres gan he bathe
The ruby in his signet, and it sette
Upon the were deliuerliche and rathe
Therwith a thousande times, er he lette
He kisse tho the lettre that he shette
And saide, lettre a blisful destine
The shapen is, my lady shal the se

This Pandare toke the lettre, & that betime
A morowe, and to his neces paleis sterte
And fast he swore, that it was passed prime
And gan to iape, and said i wis mine harte
So freshe it is, although it sore smerte
I mate nat slepe neuer a Maies morowe
I haue a joly wo, a lusty sorowe

Creseide, whan that she her vncle herde
With dredeful harte, and desirous to here
The cause of his comming, thus answerde
Now by your faith mine vncle (q she) dere
What maner windes gideth you now here
Tell vs your joly wo, and your penaunce
How ferforth be ye put in loues daunce

By God (q he) I hope alwaie behinde
And to laugh, it thought her hart brest
(q Pandarus (loke alwaie that ye finde
Game in mine hood, but herkeneth if you lest
Ther is right now come into the toune a gest
A Grek espie, and telleth new thinges
For whiche I come to tell you newe tidinges

Into the gardin go we, and ye shal here
Al priuely of this a long sermoun
With that thei wenten arme in arme ifere
Into the gardin fro the chambre doun
And whan he was so farre, that the soun
Of that he spake, no man heren might
He said her thus, and out the letter plight

Lo, he that is al holly yours free
Him recommaundeth lowly to your grace
And sent you this letter here by me
Iuiseth you on it, whan ye han space
And of some goodly answere you purchase
Or helpe me God so, plainely for to saine
He maie not longe liuen for his paine

Ful dredefully tho gan she stonde stil
And toke it not, but al her humble chere
Gan for to chaunge, and said scripe nor bil
For loue of God, that toucheth such matere
Ne bring me none, and also vncle dere
To mine estate haue more regarde I pray
Than to his lust, what should I more say

And loketh now if this be resonable
And letteth not for fauour ne for slouthe
To saine a sothe, now is it couenable
To mine estate, by God and by my trouthe
To take it, or to haue of him routhe
In harming of my selfe, or in repreue
Beare it aien, for him that yeon leue

This Pandarus gan her for to stare
And said, now is this the greatest wonder
That euer I sawe, let be this nice fare
To deth mote I smitten be with thonder
Yf for the citie, whiche that stondeth yonder
Would I a letter vnto you bring or take
To harme of you: what list you thus it make

But thus ye faren well nighe all and some
That he that most desireth you to serue
Of him ye retche lest, where he become
And whether that he liue, or els sterue
But for al that, that euer I maie deserue
Refuse it not (q he) and hente her fast
And in her bosome the letter doune he thrast

And said her, now cast it awaie anon
That folke maie sene, and gauren on vs twey
(q she) I can abide till thei be gon
And gan to smile, and said him, eme I pray
Suche answere as you list your selfe purucy
For truely I wol no letter write
No, than wol I (q he) so ye endite

Therwith she lough, and said go we dine
And he gan at him selfe iape faste
And said nece, I haue so great a pine
For loue, that euericke other daie I faste
And gan his best iapes forth to caste
And made her so to laugh at his folie
That she for laughter wente for to die

And whan that she was comen into the hall
Now eme (q she) we wol go dine anon
And gan some of her women to her call
And streight into her chambre gan she gone
But of her beliefe this was one
Amonges other thinges, out of drede
Ful priuely this letter for to rede

Auised word by word in euery line
And foūde no lacke, she thought he coude his
And vp it put and went her into dine (goode
And Pandarus, that in a studie stoode
Er he was ware, she toke him by the hoode
And said, ye were caught er that ye wiste
I vouchesafe (q̄ he) do what you liste

Tho wishen thei, and set hem doune & ete
And after noone ful slighly Pandarus
Gan draw him to the windowe nie the strete
And said nece, who hath araied thus
The yonder house, that stante aforyene vs
Which house (q̄ she) and gan for to beholde
And knewe it wel, & whose it was him tolde

And fellen forth in speche of thinges smale
And saten in the windowe both twey
Whan Pandarus sawe time vnto his tale
And sawe well that her folke were al awey
Now nece mine tel on (q̄ he) I prey
How liketh you the lettre that ye wot
Can he theron, for by my trouth I not

Therwith al rosy hewed tho woxe she
And gan to hum, and said, so I trowe
Aquite him wel for goddes loue (q̄ he)
My selfe to medes wol the lettre sowe
And helde his hondes vp, and sat on knowe
Nowe good nece, be it neuer so lite
Yeue me the labour, it to sowe and plite

Ye, for I can so writen (q̄ she) tho
And eke I not what I should to him say
Naie nece (q̄ Pandare) saie not so
Yet at the lest, thonketh him I pray
Of his good will: O, doth him not to dey
Now for the loue of me my nece dere
Refuseth not at this time my praiere

Depardieux (q̄ she) God leue al be wele
God helpe me so, this is the first lettre
That euer I wrote, ye al or any dele
And into a closet for to auise her bettre
She went alone, and gan her harte vnfettre
Out of disdaines prison, but a lite
And set her doun, and gan a lettre write

Of whiche to tel in shorte is mine entent
Theffecte, as ferre as I can vnderstonde
She thonked him, of al that he wel ment
Towardes her, but holden him in honde
She nolde not ne make her seluen bonde
In loue, but as his suster him to plese
She would aie faine, to done his hart an ese

She shette it, and to Pandare into gon
There as he sat, and loked into strete
And doune she set her by him on a stone
Of iaspre, vpon a quisshen of golde ibete
And said, as wisely helpe me God the grete
I neuer did a thing with more paine
Than write this, to which ye me constraine

And toke it him: He thonked her, and saide
God wot of thing ful often lothe begonne
Cometh ende good: and nece mine Creseide
That ye to him of harde now ben iwonne
Ought he be glad, by God and yonder sonne
For why, men saithe impressions light
Ful lightly ben aie redy to the flight

But ye han plaied the tiraunt al to longe
And harde was it your hart for to graue
Now stinte, that ye no lenger on it honge
Al wolden ye the forme of daunger saue
But hasteth you to done him ioye haue
For trusteth wel, to longe idone hardnesse
Causeth dispite ful often for distresse

And right as thei declared this matere
Lo Troilus, right at the stretes ende
Came riding with his tenthe somme ifere
Al softely, and thiderwarde gan bende
There as thy sate, as was his waie to wende
To paleis warde, and Pandare him aspide
And said, nece isee who cometh here ride

O flie not in, he sethe vs I suppose
Lest he may thinken that ye him eschue
Nay nay (q̄ she) and woxe as redde as rose
With that he gan her humbly salue
With dredful chere, and ofte his hewes mue
And vp his loke debonairly he cast
And becked on Pandare, and forth by past

God wot if he sat on his horse aright
Or goodly was besene that ilke day
God wot where he were like a manly knight
What should I dretche, or tel of his aray
Creseide, which that al these thinges sey
To tell in shorte, her liked al ifere
His person, his aray, his loke, his chere

His goodly maner, and his gentillesse
So well, that neuer sithe that she was borne
Ne had she suche routhe of his distresse
And howe so, she hath hard ben here beforne
To God hope I, she hath now cauzt a thorne
She shal nat pul it out this next wike
God sende mo suche thornes on to pike.

Pandare

Pandare, whiche that stode her faste by
Felte iron hotte, and he began to smite
And saide, nece I praie you hertely
Tel me that I shal asken you alite
A woman that were of his death to wite
Withouten his gilt, but for her lacke of reuth
Were it wel done (q̄ she) naie by my trouth

God helpe me so (q̄ he) ye say me sothe
Ye felen wel your selfe that I nought lie
Lo, younde he rideth (q̄ she) ye so he dothe
Wel q̄ Pandare, as I haue tolde you thrie
Let be your nice shame, and your folie
And speke with him, in easing of his herte
Let nicete nat do you dothe smerte

But theron was to heauen and to done
Considering al thing, it maie nat be
And why? for shame, and it were eke to sone
To graunten him so great a liberte
For plainly her entent, as (saide she)
Was for to loue him vn wil, if she might
And guerdon him with nothing but w̄ sight

But Pandare thought, it shal nat be so
If that I maie, this nice opinion
Shal nat ben holden fully yeres two
What should I make of this a longe sermon?
He must assent on that conclusion
As for the time, and whan that it was eue
And al was wel, he rose and toke his leue

And on his way fast homeward he spedde
And right for ioy he felte his hert daunce
And Troilus he founde alone abedde
That laie, as done these louers in a traunce
Betwixen hope and derke disesperaunce
But Pandare, right at his in comming
He song, as who saith, lo, somwhat I bring

And saide, who is in his bedde so sone
Yburied thus? it am I frende (q̄ he)
Who Troilus, naie, helpe me so the moone
(q̄ Pandarus) thou shalt vp rise and se
A charme that was sent right nowe to the
The whiche can healen the of thine axesse
If thou do forth with al thy besinesse

Ye through the might of God (q̄ Troilus)
And Pandarus gan him the letter take
And saide, parde God hath holpen vs
Haue here a light, and loke on all these blake
But oft gan the hart glad and quake
Of Troilus, while he it gan to rede
So as the wordes yaue him hope or drede

But finally he toke al for the beste
That she him wrote, for somwhat he beheldc
On which he thought he might his hert rest
Al couered she the wordes vnder shelde
Thus to the more worthy part he helde
That what for hope, and Pandarus behelde
His great wo forȝede he at the leste

But as we maie al daie our selues se
Through wood or cole the more fire
Right so encrease of hoope, of what it be
Therwith ful ofte encreaseth eke desire
Or as an oke cometh of a litel spire
So through this letter, which ȳ she him sent
Encreasen gan desire of whiche he brent

Wherfore I say alway, that daie and night
This Troilus gan to desiren, more
Thē he did erst through hope, & did his might
To prosen on, as by Pandarus lore
And writen to her of his sorowes sore
Fro day to day, he let it nought refreide
That by Pandare he somwhat wrot or seide

And did also his other obseruaunces
That till a louer longeth in this caas
And after that his dice turned on chaunces
So was he either glad, or saide alas
And held after his gestes aie his paas
And after suche answers, as he hadde
So were his daies sory either gladde

But to Pandare alway was his recours
And pitously gan aie on him to plaine
And him besought of rede, and some socours
And Pandarus, that sawe his wode paine
Wert wel nigh deed for routh sothe to saine
And besely with al his hert caste
Some of his wo to sleen, and that as faste

And said, Lorde and frende, and brother dere
God wot that thy disease dothe me wo
But wolt thou stinten al this woful chere
And by my trouth, er it be daies two
And God to forne, yet shal I shape it so
That thou shalt come into a certaine place
There as ȳ maist thy selfe praien her of grace

And certainly I not if thou it wosse
But thei that ben experte in loue, it say
It is one of these thinges forthereth most
A man to haue a leiser for to praie
And siker place, his wo for to bewraie
For in good hart it mote some routh impresse
To here and se the giltlesse in distresse

Paraucnture thinkest thou, though it be so
That kinde would her done for to beginne
To haue a maner routh vpon my wo
Saith daũger nay, thou shalt me neuer win
So ruleth her hartes goste within
That though she bende, yet she stont on rote
What in effect is this vnto my bote

Thinke here ayen, whan that the sturdy oke
On whiche men hacketh oft for the nones
Receiued hath the happy falling stroke
The great sweight doth it come al at ones
As done these rockes, or these milne stones
For swifter course cometh thig ȳ is of wight
When it discendeth, than done thinges light

But rede that boweth doune for euery blast
Ful lightly cesse winde, it wol arise
But so nil not an oke, whan it is cast
It nedeth me nought longe the forbise
Men shal reioysen of a great empzise
Atcheued wel, and stant withouten dout
Al haue men ben the lenger there about

But Troilus, now tel me if the lest
A thing, whiche that I shal asken the
Whiche is thy brother, that thou louest best
As in thy very hartes priuite
I wis my brother Deiphebus tho (q he)
Now (q Pandare) er houres twise twelue
He shal the case, on wilt of it himselue

Deiphebus him answerde: O, is nat this
That thou spekest of to me thus straungely
Creseide my frende? He saide him yes
Than nedeth (q Deiphebus) hardely
No more of this to speke, for trusteth wel ȳ I
Wol be her Champion with spore and yerde
I ne rought nat, though all her foes it herde

But tel me how we, for thou wost this matere
I might best auailen, now lette se
(q Pandarus (if ye my lorde so dere
Wolden as now do this honour to me
To praien her to morowe, so that she
Came vnto you, her plaintes to deuise
Her aduersaries would of it agrise

And if I more durst praie as now
And chargen you to haue so great trauaile
To haue some of your brethrē here with you
That mighten to her cause bet auaile
Than wote I wel she might neuer faile
For to ben holpen, what at your instaunce
What with her other frendes gouernaunce

Deiphebus, whiche that comen was of kinde
To al honour and bounte to consente
Answerde, it shal be done: and I can finde
Yet greater helpe to this mine entente
What woldest ȳ saine, if for Heleine I sent
To speke of this, I trowe it be the best
For she may leden Paris as her lest

Of Hector, which ȳ is my Lord my brother
It nedeth nat to praien him frende to be
For I haue herde him, o time and eke other
Speken of Creseide suche honour, that he
Wate saine no bet, such hap to him hath she
It nedeth nat his helpes more craue
He shal be suche, right as we wol him haue

Speke thou thy selfe also to Troilus
On my behalfe, and praie him with vs dine
Sir, al this shalbe done (q Pandarus)
And toke his leaue, and neuer gan to fine
But to his neces house as streight as line
He came, and founde her fro the meate arise
And set him doun, a spake right in this wise

He saide, O dery God, so haue I ronne
Lo nece mine, se ye nat how I swete
I not where ye the more thanke me, conne
Be ye not ware how false Poliphete
Is now about ekt lones for to plete
And bring on you aduocacies newe?
I, no (q she) and chaunged al her hewe

What

what is he moze about me to dzetche
And done me wzong, what shal I don, alas
Yet of him selfe nothing would I retche
Nere it foz Antenoz and Eneas
That ben his frendes in suche maner caas
But foz the loue of God, mine vncle dere
No foyce of that, let him haue al ifere

Withouten that, I haue inough foz vs
Nay (q Pandare) it shal nothing be so
Foz I haue ben right now at Deiphebus
At Hectoz, and mine other lozdes mo
And shortly maked eche of hem his fo
That by my thzifte, he shal it neuer winne
Foz aught he can, whan so that he beginne

And as thei casten what was best to done
Deiphebus, of his owne curtesie
Came her to pzie, in his pzoper persone
To holde him on the mozowe companie
At diner, whiche she nolde not denie
But goodly gan to his pzeier obey
He thonked her, and went vpon his wey

Whan this was don, this Pandare anone
To tel in shozte, and forth he gan to wende
To Troilus, as stil as any stone
And al this thing he tolde him wozde & ende
And howe that he Deiphebus gan to blende
And saide him, now is time of that ye conne
To bere the well to mozow, and all is wonne

Now speke, now pray, now pitously cõplaine
Let nat foz nice shame, dzede oz slouth
Somtime a man mote tel his owne paine
Beleue it, and she wol haue on the routh
Thou shalt ben saued by thy faith in trouth
But wel wot, I thou now art in a dzede
And what it is, I lay that I can arede

Thou thinkest now, how shoulde I dõ al this
Foz by my cheres mosten folke espie
That foz her loue is, that I fare amis
Yet had I leuer vnwist foz sozow die
Nowe thinke nat so, foz thou dost gret folie
Foz I right now haue founden a manere
Of sleight, foz to koueren al thy chere

Thou shalt gon ouernight, and that bliue
Vnto Deiphebus house, as the to plaie
Thy malady awaie the bet to dziue
Foz whiche thou semeth siche soth to saie
Sone after that, in thy bedde the laie
And saie thou maist no lenger vp endure
And lie right there, and bide thine auenture

Saie that thy feuer is wonte the foz to take
The same time, and last til a mozowe
And let se now how well thou canst it make
Foz parde siche is he that is in sozowe
Go now farwel, and Venus here to vozowe
I hope and thou this purpose holde ferme
Thy grace she shal fully there conforme

(q Troilus) iwis thou nedelesse
Counsailest me, that sickeliche I me faine
Foz I am sicke in ernest doutlesse
So that wel nigh I sterue foz the paine
(q Pandarus) thou shalt the better plaine
And hast the lesse nede to counterfete
Foz him demeth men hote, y seeth him swete

Lo, holde the at thy trifle close, and I
Shal wel the deere vnto the bowe dziue
Therwith he toke his leaue al softly
And Troilus to paleis went bliue
So glad ne was he neuer in al his liue
And to Pandarus rede gan al assent
And to Deiphebus house at night he went

What nedeth it you to tellen al the chere?
That Deiphebus vnto his bzother made
Oz his aris, oz his sickeliche manere
How men gon him with clothes foz to lade
whẽ he was laid, & how mẽ would him glade
But all foz nouzt, he helde forth aie the wise
That ye han herde Pandare er this deuise

But certaine is, er Troilus him leide
Deiphebus had praied him ouernight
To ben a frende, and helping to Creseide
God wot that he graunted anon right
To ben her ful frend with al his might
But such a nede was it to praien him thenne
As foz to bidde a woode man to renne

The mozow came, and nighen gan the time
Of mealtide, that the faire quene Heleine
Shope her to ben an houre after the prime
With Deiphebus, to whom she nolde faine
But as his suster, homely soothe to saine
She came to diner, in her plaine entent
But God & Pandare wist al what this ment

Came eke Creseide all innocent of this
Antigone her nece, and Tarbe also
But flie we now prolixite best is
Foz loue of God, and let vs fast go
Right to the effecte, withouten tales mo
Why al this folke assembled in this place
And let vs of her saluinges pace

Great honour did hem Deiphebus certaine
And fedde hem wel, with al that might like
But euermo alas, was his refraine
Hy good brother Troilus the like
Lithe yet, and therwithal he gan to like
And after that he pained him to glade
Hem as he might, and chere good he made

Complained eke Heleine of his sickenesse
So faithfully that it pety was to here
And euery wight gan weren for ares
A leche anon, and saide in this manere
Hen curen folke, this charme I wol the lere
But there sate one, al list her nat to teche
That thought, yet best could I ben his leeche

After complaint him gonnen thei to preise
As folke don yet whā some wight hath begon
To preise a man, and with preise him reise
A thousande folde yet higher than the son
He is, he can, that fewe Lordes hon
And Pandarus of that thei would afferme
He nought forgate her praising to conferme

Herde al this thing Creseide wel inough
And euerie worde gan for to notifie
For whiche with sobre chere her herte lough
For who is that ne would her glorifie
To mowen suche a knight done liue or die
But al passe I, lest ye to longe dwell
But for o fine is al that euer I tell

The time came fro diner for to rise
And as hem ought, arisen euerichone
And gone a while of this and that deuise
But Pandarus brake al this speche anon
And said to Deiphebus, wol ye gon
If your wil be, as I you praide
To speken of the neds of Creseide

Heleine, which that by the honde her helde
Toke first the tale and saide, go we blithe
An goodly on Creseide she beheld
And said, Ioues let him neuer thriue
That doth you harm, a reue him sone of liue
And yeue me sorowe, but he shal it rue
If that I may, and al folke be true

Tel thou thy nices case (q Deiphebus)
To Pandarus, for thou canst best it tell
Hy Lordes and my Ladies, it stant thus
What should I lenger (q he) do you dwell
He ronge hem out a proces like a bell
Upon her foe, that hight Poliphete
So heinous, that men might on it spete

Answerde of this eche worke of hē than other
And Poliphete thei gonnen thus to warien
An honged be suche one, were he my brother
And so he shal, for it ne maie nought varien
What should I lenger in this tale tarien
Plaineliche al at ones thei her highten
To ben her frēde, in all that euer thei mightē

Spake than Heleine, and said Pandarus
Wot aught my lord my brother of this mater
I meane Hector, or wote it Troilus
He said ye, but wol ye me now here
Me thinketh thus, sith that Troilus is here
It were good, if that ye would assent
She tolde him her selfe al this er she went

For he wol haue the more her grefe at harte
Bicause lo, that she a Lady is
And by your wil, I wol but in right sterte
And do you wete, and that anon iwis
If that he slepe, or wol aught here of this
And in he lept, and said him in his eere
God haue thy soule, brought haue I thy bere

To smilen of this gan tho Troilus
And Pandarus without rekening
Out went anon to Heleine and Deiphebus
And said hem, so there be no tariyng
Ne more prease, he wol well that ye bring
Creseide my Lady, that is here
And as he maie enduren, he wol her here

But wel ye wote, the chambre is but lite
And fewe folke may lightly make it warme
Now loketh ye, for I wol haue no wite
To bring in prease, ỹ might don him harme
Or him diseasen, for my better arme
yet were it bet she bidde till ofte soonis
Now lothe ye that knowen what to don is

I say for me best is, as I can knowe
That no wight in ne wende, but ye twey
But it were I, for I can not in a throwe
Reherse her case, vnlike that she can sey
And after this she may ones him prey
To ben good Lorde in short, and take her leue
This may not mokell of his ese him reue

And eke for she is straunge, he woll forbere
His ease, whiche that him dare nat for you
The other thing that toucheth nat to her
He wol it tel, I wote it wel right now
That secrete is, and for the townes prow
And thei that knew nothing of his entente
Without more, to Troilus in thei wente

Heleine

Heleine in all her goodly soft wise
Gan him salue, and womanly to plaie
And saied iwis, ye mote algate arise
Now faire brother be all hole I praie
And gan her arme right ouer his shulder laie
And him with all her wit to recomfort
As she best could, she gan him to disport.

So after this (quod she) we you beseke
My dere brother Deiphebus and I
For loue of God, and so doeth Pandare eke
To been good Lorde and frende right hartely
Unto Creseide, whiche that certainly
Receiued wrong, as wot well here Pandare
That can her case well bet than I declare.

This Pandarus gan newe his tong affile
And all her case rehearce, and that anone
When it was saied, sone after in a while
(quod Troilus) as sone as I maie gone
I will right fain, with all my might ben one
Haue God my trouth, her cause to susteine
Now good thrift haue ye (quod Helein ỹ quene).

(quod Pandarus) and it your will be
That she maie take her leaue, or that she go
O, els God forbid it (tho quod he)
If that she vouchsafe for to doe so
And with that worde (quod Troilus) ye two
Deiphebus, and my suster leue and dere
To you haue I to speake of a mattere.

To been auised by your rede the better
And found (as hap was) at his beddes hedde
The copie of a treatise, and a letter
That Hector had him sent, to aske redde
If suche a man was worthy to been dedde
Wote I naught who, but in a grisly wise
He praied hem anone on it auise.

Deiphebus gan this letter for to vnfolde
In earnest greate, so did Heleine the Quene
And roming outward, fast it gonne beholde
Downward a steire, into an herber grene
This ilke thing redden hem betwene
And largely the mountenaunce of an houre
Thei gonne on it to reden and to poure.

Now let hem rede, and tourne we anone
To Pandarus, that gan full soft prie
That all was well, and out he gan to gone
Into the greate chamber, and that in hie
And saied, God saue all this companie
Come nece mine, my ladie Quene Heleine
Abideth you, and eke my Lordes tweine.

Rise, take with you your nece Antigone
Or whom you list, or no force hardely
The lasse preasse the bet, come forth with me
And loke that ye thonken humbly
Hem all thre, and whan ye maie goodly
Your time isee, taketh of hem your leaue
Lest we to long his restes him bireaue.

All innocent of Pandarus entent
(quod tho Creseide) go we vncle dere
And arme in arme, inward with him she wēt
Auising well her wordes and her chere
And Pandarus, in earnestfull manere
Saied, all folke for Goddes loue I praie
Stinteth right here, and softly you plaie.

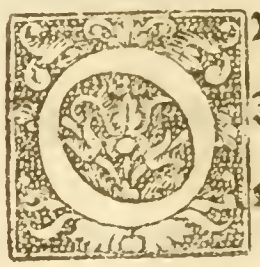
Auiseth you what folke been here within
And in what plite one is, God him amende
And inward thus full softely begin
Nece I coniure, and highly you defende
On his halfe, whiche that soule vs all sende
And in the vertue of corounes twaine
Slea nat this man, ỹ hath for you this paine

Fie on the deuill, thinke whiche one he is
And in what plite he lieth, come of anone
Thinke all soche taried tide but lost it nis
That woll ye bothe saine, whan ye been one
Secondly, there yet deuineth none
Upon you two, come of now if ye conne
While folke is blent, lo, all the time is wonne

In tittering and pursute, and delaies
The folke deuine, at wegging of a stree
And though ye would han after merie daies
Than dare ye nat, and why? for she and she
Spake soche a worde, thus loked he and he
Lest time be lost, I dare nat with you deale
Come of therfore, and bringeth him to heale.

But now to you, ye louers that been here
Was Troilus nat in a cankedort
That laie, & might the wispring of hem here
And thought o lorde, rizt now rēneth my sort
Fully to die, or haue anone comfort
And was the first time he should her praie
Of loue, O mightie God, what shall he saie.

Explicit liber secundus.



Blisfull light, of whiche the
beames clere
Adorneth all the third heauen
faire
O sonnes leke, o Joues dough-
ter dere

Pleasaunce of loue, O goodly debonaire
In gentle hartes aie redy to repaire
O very cause of heale and of gladnesse
Iheried be thy might and thy goodnesse.

In heauen and hell, in yearth, and salt see
Is felt thy might, if that I well discerne
As man, beast, fishe, herbe, and grene tree
Thei fele in times with vapour eterne
God loueth, and to loue woll naught werne
And in this worlde no liues creature
Withouten loue is worthy, or maie endure.

Ye Ioues first, to thilke affectes glade
Through whiche that thinges liuen all, & be
Comenden, and amorous hem made
On mortall thing, and as you list aie ye
Yeue hem in loue, ease, or aduersite
And in a thousande formes doune hem sent
For loue in yearth, and whō you list he hent.

Ye fiers Mars apeasen of his ire
And as you list, ye maken hartes digne
Algates hem that ye woll set a fire
Thei dreden shame, and vices thei resigne
Ye doen hem curteis be, freshe, and benigne
And hie or lowe, after a wight entendeth
The ioies that he hath, your might it sendeth

Ye holden reigne and house in vnite
Ye lothfast cause of frendship been also
Ye knowen all thilke couered qualite
Of thinges, whiche that folke wondren so
Whan thei can nat construe how it maie go
She loueth him, or why he loueth here
As why this fishe, & nat that cometh to were

Ye folke a lawe haue set in vniuerse
And this knowe I by hem that louers be
That who so sterueth with you hath ẏ werse
Now Ladie bright, for thy benignite
At reuerence of hem that seruen thee
Whose clerke I am, so teacheth me deuise
Some ioie of that is felt in thy seruice.

Ye, in my naked harte sentement
In hilde, and doe me shewe of thy swetnesse
Caliope, thy voice be now present
For now is neede, seest thou nat my distresse
How I mote tellanon right the gladnesse
Of Troilus, to Venus heriyng
To whiche who nede hath, God him bring.

Incipit liber tertius.

Lie all this meane while Troilus
Recording his lesson in this manere
Makeie thought he, thus woll I saie and thus
Thus woll I plain vnto my Ladie dere
That worde is good, & this shall be my chere
This nill I nat foryeten in no wise
God leue him werken as he can deuise.

And lorde so that his harte gan to quappe
Hearing her come, and short for to sike
And Pandarus that ledde her by the lappe
Came nere, and gan in at the curtein pike
And saied, God doe bote on all sike
Se who is here, you comen to visite
Lo, here is she that is your death to wite

Therwith it semed as he wept almoste
Alas (q Troilus) so routhfully
Where me by wo, O mightie God thou woste
Who is all there, I see nat truely
Sir (q Creseide) it is Pandare and I
Ye swete harte alas, I maie nat rise
To knele, and doe you honour in some wise.

And dressed him vpward, and she right tho
Gan bothe her houdes soft vpon him leie
O for the loue of God, doe ye not so
To me (q she) ey what is this to seie
Sir, comen am I to you for causes tweie
First you to thonke, and of your Lordship eke
Continuaunce I would you beseke.

This Troilus that heard his Ladie praie
Of lordship, him wore neither quick ne dedde
Ne might o worde for shame to it saie
Although men shoulden smiten of his hedde
But Lorde so he wore sodaunlithe redde
And sir, his lesson that he wende conne
To praien her, is through his wit ironne.

Creseide all this aspied well inough
For she was wise, & loued him neuer the lasse
All nere he in all aperte, or made it tough
Or was to bolde, to sing a foole a Masse
But whan his shame gan somwhat to passe
His reasons, as I maie my rimes holde
I woll you tell, as teachen bookes olde.

In chaunged voice, right for his very drede
Whiche voice eke quoke, & therto his manere
Goodlie abasht, and now his hewes rede
Now

Now pale, vnto Creseide his ladie dere
With loke doune cast, & humble yolden chere
Lo, the alderfirst worde that him astarte
Was twise, mercie, mercie swete harte.

And stint a while, & whā he might out bring
The next worde was, God wote for I haue
As faithfully as I haue had konning
Been yours all, God so my soule saue
And shall, till that I wofull wight be graue
And though I dare ne can vnto you plain
I wis I suffer not the lasse pain.

Thus moche as now, ah, womanliche wise
I maie out bring, and if this you displease
That shall I wreke vpon mine owne like
Right sone I trowe, & doe your harte an ease
If with my death, your hart maie apease
But sens that ye han heard me somwhat sey
Now retche I neuer how sone that I deie.

Ther with his manly sorowe to beholde
It might haue made an harte of stone to rew
And Pandare wept as he to water would
And poked euer his nece newe and newe
And saied, wo begon been hartes true
For loue of God, make of this thing an ende
Or slea vs bothe at ones, er that ye wende.

I, what (q she) by God and by my trouth
I not nat what ye wilne that I seie
Eie, what (q he) that ye haue on him routh
For Goddes loue, and doeth him nat deie
Now than thus (q she) I woll him preie
To teil me the fine of his entente
Yet wist I neuer well what that he mente.

what that I meane, O swete harte dere
(q Troilus) O goodly fresshe free
That with the streames of your iyen clere
Ye woulden somtime frendly on me see
And than agreen that I maie been he
Withouten braunche of vice, on any wise
In trouthe alwaie, to doe you my seruice.

As to my ladie right, and chief resort
With all my witte and all my diligence
And to haue right as you list comfort
Under your yerde egall to mine offence
As death, if that I breake your defence
And that ye digne me so moche honour
Me to commaunden aught in any hour.

And I to been your bery humble true
Secrete, and in my paines pacient
And euer to desiren freshly newe
To seruen, and to been aie like diligent
And with good harte, all holly your talent
Receiuen well, how sore that me smarte
Lo, this meane I, mine owne swete harte.

(q Pandarus) lo here an hard request
And reasonable, a Ladie for to werne
Now nece mine, by Natall Ioues feest
Were I a God, ye should serue as yerne
That heren well this mā wol nothing yerne
But your honor, and seen him almoste sterue
And been so lothe to suffre him you to serue.

With that she gan her iyen on him cast
Full easely, and full debonairly
Auising her, and hied not to fast
With neuer a worde, but saied him softely
Mine honour safe, I woll well truely
And in soche forme, as I can now deuise
Receiuen him fully to my seruice.

Besechying him for Goddes loue, that he
Would in honour of trouth and gentillesse
As I well meane, eke meanen well to me
And mine honour, with wit and businesse
Aie kepe, and if I maie doen him gladnesse
From hence forthe, I wis I nill not faine
Now bethe all hole, no lenger ye ne plain.

But natheless, this warne I you (q she)
Al hinges sonne although ye be I wis
Ye shall no more haue soucraintē
Of me in loue, than right in that case is
Ne nill forbeare if that ye doen amis
To wrath you, and while that ye me serue
Cherishen you, right after that ye deserue.

And shortly dere harte, and all my knight
Beth glad, and draweth you to lustinesse
And I shall truely, with all my full might
Your bitter tournen all to swetenesse
If I be she, that maie doe you gladnesse
For euery wo ye shall recouer a blisse
And him in armes toke, and gan him kisse.

Fill Pandarus on knees, and vp his iyen
To heauen threwe, and helde his hondes hie
Immortall God (q he) that maiest not dien
Cupide I meane, of this maiest glorifie
And Venus, thou maiest maken melodie
Withouten honde, me semeth that in toune
For this miracle iche here eche bell soune.

But ho, no more now of this mattere

For

For why? This folke woll comen vp anone
That haue the letter redde, lo I hem here
But I coniure thee Creseide, and one
And two, thou Troilus whā thou maist gone
That at mine house, ye been at my warning
For I full well shall shapen your comming.

And eaſeth there your hartes right inough
And let ſe whiche of you ſhall beare the bell
To ſpeke of loue aright, & therwith he lough
For there haue I a leſſer for to tell
(q Troilus) how long ſhall I dwell
Er this be doen: q he, whan thou maieſt riſe
This thing ſhall be right as you liſt deuiſe.

with that Heleine, and alſo Deiphebus
Tho comen vpward, right at the ſtaires ende
And Lorde ſo tho gan gronen Troilus
His brother and his ſuſter for to blende
(q Pandarus) it time is that we wende
Take nece mine your leaue at all thre
And let hem ſpeake, & cometh forth with me.

She toke her leaue at hem full thriftely
As ſhe well could, and thei her reuerence
Vnto the full didden hardely
And wonder well ſpeaken in her abſence
Of her, in praiſing of her excellence
Her gouernaunce, her wit, and her manere
Commendeden, that it ioie was to here.

Now let her wende vnto her owne place
And tourne we to Troilus againe
That gan full lightly of the letter pace
That Deiphebus had in the gardine ſaine
And of Heleine and him he would feine
Deliuered been, and ſaied that him leſt
To ſlepe, and after tales haue a reſt.

Heleine him kiſt, and toke her leue bliue
Deiphebus eke, and home went euery wight
And Pandarus, as faſte as he maie driue
To Troilus tho came, as line right
And on a paillet, all that glad night
By Troilus he laie, with merie chere
To tale, and well was hem thei were there.

whan euery wight was voided, but thei two
And all the doores weren faſt ishet
To tell in ſhort, withouten wordes mo
This Pandarus, without any let
vp roſe, and on his beddes ſide him ſet
And gan to ſpeaken in a ſober wiſe
To Troilus, as I ſhall you deuiſe.

Mine alderleueſt Lorde, and brother dere
God wot and thou, that it ſate me ſo ſore
whan I thee ſawe ſo languiſhing to here
For loue of which thy wo wore alwaie more
That I with all my might, and all my lore
Haue euer ſithen doen my buſineſſe
To bring thee to ioie out of diſtreſſe.

And haue it brought to ſoche plite as ỹ woſt
So ỹ through me thou ſtondeſt now in waie
To faren well, I ſaie it for no boſt
And woſt thou why, but ſhame it is to ſaie
For thee haue I begon a gamen plaie
whiche that I neuer doen ſhall eft for other
All tho he wer a thouſande fold my brother

That is to ſaie, for thee am I becomen
Betwixen game and earneſt, ſoche a meane
As maken women vnto men to comen
All ſaie I nat, thou woſt well what I meane
For thee haue I my nece, of vices cleane
So fully made thy gentilleſſe trift
That all ſhall been, right as thy ſelf liſt.

But God, that all wotteth take I to witneſſe
That neuer I this for couetiſe wrought
But onely for to abredge that diſtreſſe
For whiche well nie ỹ dideſt, as me thought
But good brother, doe now as thee ought
For Goddes loue, and kepe her out of blame
Sins thou art wiſe, & ſaue alwaie her name

For wel thou woſte, the name as yet of her
Emōges ỹ people, as (who ſaieth) halowed is
For that man is vnbore I dare well ſwere
That euer will that ſhe did amis
But wo is me, that I that cauſe all this
Maie thinken that ſhe is my nece dere
And I her eme, and traitour eke ifere.

And wer it will, that I through mine engin
Had in mine nece iput this fantaſie
To doen thy luſt, and holly to be thin
why: all the worlde would vpon it crie
And ſaie, that I the worſte trecherie
Did in this caſe, that euer was begon
And ſhe forlon, and thou right nought iwon

wherefore er I woll ferther gone or paas
Yet efte I thee beſeche, and fully ſaie
That priuete go with vs in this caas
That is to ſaine, that thou vs neuer wraie
And be not wrothe, though I thee ofte praie
To holden ſecre ſoche an high matter
For ſkilfull is (thou woſte well) my praier.

And

And thinke, what wo there hath betider this
For making of auauntes, as men rede
And what mischaunce in this worlde yet is
Fro daie to daie, right for that wicked dede
For whiche these wise clerkes that been dede
Haue euer this prouerbed to vs young
That the first vertue is to kepe the toung.

And nere it that I wilne as now abredge
Diffusion of speache, I could almoste
A thousande olde stories thee aledge
Of women loste, through false & fooles boste
Prouerbes canst thy self inow, and woste
Iwent that vice for to been a blabbe
All saied men sothe, as often as they gabbe.

O tongue alas, so often here before
Hast thou made many a ladie bright of hewe
Saied wela waie the daie that I was borne
And many a maidens sorowe for to newe
And for the more part all is vntrue
That men of yelpe, & it wer brought to preue
Of kinde, none auauntour is to leue.

Auauntour and a lier, all is one
As thus, I pose a woman graunt me
Her loue, and saieth that other woll she none
And I am swore to holden it secre
And after I tell it two or three
I wis I am a bauntour at the least
And lier eke, for I breake my beheest

Now loke than, if thei be not to blame
Soche maner folk, what shal I clepe hē what
That hem auauant of women, and by name
That yet behight hem neuer this ne that
Ne knowe hem more than mine old hat
No wonder is, so God me sende hele
Though women dreden with vs men to dele

I saie not this for no mistrust of you
Ne for no wise men, but for fooles nice
And for the harme that in the worlde is now
As well for folie oft, as for malice
For well wote I, in wise folke that vice
No woman dredeth, if she be well auised
For wise been by fooles harme chastised.

But now to purpose, leue brother dere
Haue all this thing ȳ I haue saied in minde
And kepe thee close, and be now of good chere
For all thy daies thou shalt me true finde
I shall thy processe set in soche a kinde
And God toforne, that it shall thee suffise
For it shall be, right as thou wolt deuise.

For well I wote, thou meanest well parde
Therefore I dare this fully vndertake
Thou wost ehe, what thy ladie graunted thee
And daie is set the charters to make
Haue now good night, I mait no leger wake
And bid for me, sith thou art now in blisse
That God thee sende death, or sone lisse.

Who might tellen halfe the ioie or feste
Whiche that the soule of Troilus tho felte
Hearing the effect of Pandarus beheste
His old wo, that made his harte swelt
Gan tho for ioie waxen, and to melt
And all the richesse of his sighes sore
At ones fled, he felt of hem no more.

But right so as these holtes, & these haie is
That han in winter dedde been and drie
Reuesten hem in grene, whan that Maie is
Whan euery lustie listeth to plete
Right in that self wise, sothe to seie
More sodainly his harte full of ioie
That gladder was there neuer man in Troie.

And gan his loke on Pandarus vp cast
Full soberly, and frendly on to se
And saied, frende, in Aprill the last
As well thou wost, if it remember thee
How nigh the death for wo thou found me
And how thou diddest all thy businesse
To knowe of me the cause of my distresse.

Thou wost how long I it forbare to saie
To thee, that art the man that I best trist
And perill none was it to thee to bewraie
That wist I well: but tell me if thee list
Sith I so lothe was, that thy self it wist
How durst I no tellen of this matere
That quake now, and no wight maie as here

But natheless, by that God I thee swere
That as him list maie all this worlde gouerne
And if I liue, Achilles with his spere
Mine harte cleaue, all were my life eterne
As I am mortall, if I late or yerne
Would it bewraie, or durst, or should conne
For all the good that God made vnder sunne

That rather die I would, and determine
As thinketh me now, stocked in prison
In wretchednesse, in filthe, and in vermine
Captife to cruell king Agamenon
And this in all the temples of this toun
Vpon the Goddes all, I woll thee swere
To morowe daie, if that thee liketh here.

And

And that thou haſt ſo moche ſdoen for me
That I ne maie it neuer more deſerue
This knowe I well, all might I now for thee
A thouſande times on a morowe ſterue
I can no more, but that I woll thee ſerue
Right as thy ſlaue, whither ſo thou wende
For euer more, vnto my liues ende.

But here with al mine hart I thee beſeche
That neuer in me thou deme ſoche folie
As I ſhall ſaine, me thought by thy ſpeche
That this whiche thou me doeſt for cõpanie
I ſhould wene it were a baudrie
I am not woode, all if I leude be
It is not ſo, that wote I well parde.

But he that goeth for gold, or for richeſſe
On ſoche meſſages, call him what ye liſt
And this that thou doeſt, call it gentilneſſe
Compaſſion, and felowſhip, and triſt
Depart it ſo, for wide where is wiſt
How that there is diuerſite required
Betwixen thinges like, as I haue lered.

And that thou knowe I thinke not ne wene
That this ſeruice a ſhame be or iape
I haue my faire ſuſted Polexene
Caſſandre, Helein, or any of the frape
Be ſhe neuer ſo faire, or well ſhape
Tell me, whiche thou wilt of euerichone
To haue for thine, and let me than alone.

But ſith that thou haſt doen me this ſeruice
My life to ſaue, and for non hope of mede
So for the loue of God, this greate empriſe
Performe it out, now is the moſte nede
For high and lowe, withouten any drede
I woll alwaie thine heſtes al kepe
Haue now good night, and let vs bothe ſlepe

Thus helde hem eche of other well apaied
That all the worlde ne might it bet amende
And on the morowed whan thei were araied
Eche to his owne nedes gan entende
But Troilus, though as the fire he brende
For charpe delire of hope, and of pleaſaunce
He not forgate his good gouernaunce.

But in himſelf, with manhode gan reſtrain
Eche raſell deede, and eche vnbridled chere
That all that liuen ſothe to ſaine
Ne ſhould haue wiſte, by worde or by manere
What that he ment, as touching this matere
From euery wight, as ferre as is the cloud
He was ſo wiſe, and well diſſimulen could.

And all the while whiche that I now deuiſe
This was his life, with all his full might
By daie he was in Martes high ſeruice
That is to ſain, in armes as a knight
And fore the more part the long night
He lay and thought how that he might ſerue
His ladie beſte, her thanke for to deſerue.

Nill I not ſweare, although he laie ſoft
That in his thought nas ſomwhat diſeaſed
Ne that he tourned on his pillowes oft
And would of that him miſſed haue bē eaſed
But in ſoche caſe, men be nat alwaie pleaſed
For naught I wote, no more than was he
That can I deme of poſſibilite.

But certain is, to purpoſe for to go
That in this while, as written is in geſte
He ſawe his ladie ſomtime, and alſo
She with him ſpake, whan ỹ ſhe durſt at leſte
And by her bothe auiſe, as was the beſte
Appoincteden full warely in this nede
So as thei durſt, how thei would procede

But it was ſpoken in ſo ſhort a wiſe
In ſoche awaite alwaie, and in ſoche fere
Leſt any wight deuinen or deuiſe
Would of hem two, or to it laie an eare
That all this worlde ſo leſe to hem ne were
As that Cupede would hem grace ſende
To maken of her ſpeache right an ende.

But thilke little that thei ſpake or wrought
His wiſe ghoſte toke aie, of all ſoche hede
It ſemed her he wiſte what ſhe thought
Withouten worde, ſo that it was no nede
To bid him aught to doen, or aught forbede
For which ſhe thought ỹ loue, al come it late
Of all ioie, had opened her the yate.

And ſhortly of this proceſſe for to pace
So well his werke and wordes he beſet
That he ſo full ſtode in his ladies grace
Twentie thouſande times er ſhe let
She thonked God ſhe euer with him met
So could he him gouerne in ſoche ſeruice
That all the worlde ne might it bet deuiſe.

For ſhe founde him ſo diſcrete in all
So ſecrete, and of ſoche obeiſaunce
That well ſhe felt he was to her a wall
Of ſteele, and ſhelde of euery diſpleaſaunce
That to been in his good gouernaunce
So wiſe he was, ſhe was no more afered
I meane as ferre as aught been required.

And

And Pandarus to quicke al waie the fire
was euer ilike prest and diligent
To ease his frende was set al his desire
He shone aie on, he to and fro was sent
He letters bare whan Troilus was absent
That neuer man, as in his frendes nede
Ne bare him bet than he, withouten drede

But now parauenture some mā waitē wold
That euery worde or sonde, loke or chere
Of Troilus, that I rehercen shold
In al this while, vnto his lady dere
I trowe it were a long thing for to here
Or of what wight ỹ stante in suche distounte
His wordes al, or euery loke to pointe

Forsothe I haue not herde it done er this
In storie none, ne no man here I wene
And though I would, I could not i wis
For there was some epistel hem betwene
That would (as saith min auctor) wel cōtene
Nie halfe this boke, of which hī list not write
How should I than a line of it endite

But to the great effecte, than saie I thus
That stonding in concorde and in quiete
This ilke two, Creseide and Troilus
As I haue tolde, and in this time swete
Saue onely often might thei not mete
Ne leiser haue, her speches to fulfell
That it befil, right as I shal you tell

That Pandarus, that euer did his might
Right for the fine that I shal speke of here
As for to bringen to his house some night
His faire nece, and Troilus ifere
Where as at leiser al this highe matere
Touching her loue, were at the ful vp boūde
Had out of doute a time to it founde

For he with great deliberacion
Had euery thing that therto might auaile
Forne cast, and put in execution
And neither lefte for coste ne for trauaile
Come if hem liste, hem should nothing faile
And for to ben in aught aspied there
That wiste he wel an impossible were

Dredelesse it clere was in the winde
Of euery pie, and euery let game
Now al is wel, for al the world is blinde
In this mater, bothe fremed and tame
This timber is al redy vp to frame
Us lacketh naught, but that we weten wold
A certaine houre, in whiche she comen shold

And Troilus, that al this purueiaunce
Knew at the ful, and waited on it aie
And here vpon ehe made great ordinaunce
And founde his cause, and therwith his aray
Yf that he were missed night or day
There while he was aboute this seruice
That he was gone to done his sacrifice

And must at suche a temple alone wake
Inswered of Apollo for to be
And first to sene the holy laurer quake
Er that Apollo spake out of the tree
To tel him next whan grehes should flie
And for thy let him no man, God forbede
But praie Apollo helpe in this nede

Now is there litell more for to done
But Pandare vp, and shortly for to saine
Right sone vpon the chaūginge of the Mone
Whan lightlesse is ỹ world a night or twaine
And that the welken shope him for to raine
He streight a morowe vnto his nete went
Ye haue wel herde the fine of his entente

Whan he was comen, he gan anon to plaie
As he was wont, and of him selfe to iape
And finally he swore, and gan her saie
By this and that, she should him not escape
No lenger done him after her to cape
But certainly, she must by her leue
Come soupen in his house with him at eue

At which she lough, and gan her first excuse
And said: it raineth: lo, how should I gone
Let be (q̄ he) ne stonde not thus to muse
This mote be don, ye shal come there anone
So at the last, herof thei fel at one
Or els fast he swore her in her eere
He nolde neuer comen there she were

Sone after this, she to him gan rowne
And asked him if Troilus were there
He swore her nay, for he was out of towne
And said, nece: I pose that he were there
You durst neuer haue the more leere
For rather than men might him there aspie
He were leuer a thousande folde to die

Naught list mine auctour fully to declare
what that she thought, whan he said so
That Troilus was out of toune ifare
And if he said therof soth or no
But that withouten awaite with him to go
She graunted him, sithe he her that besought
And as his nece obeyed as her ought

But nathelesse, yet gan she him beseche
(Although with him to gone it was no feere)
For to beware of gofisshe peoples speche
That dremē thinges, which that neuer were
And wel auise him whom he brought there
And said him eme, sens I must on you trist
Loke al be wel, and do now as you list

He swore her this, by stockes and by stones
And by the goddes that in heuen dwell
Or els were him leauer soule and bones
With Pluto King, as depe ben in Hell
As Tantalus, what should I more tell
Whan al was wel, he rose and toke his leue
And she to souper came whan it was eue

With a certaine of her owne men
And with her faire nece Antigone
And other of her women nine or ten
But who was glad nowe, who as trowe ye?
But Troilus, that stode and might it se
Throughout a litel window in a stewe
Ther he besheth, sith midnight was in mewe

Unwist of euery wight, but of Pandare
But to the point, now whan ẏ she was come
With al ioie, and al frendes fare
Her eme anon in armes hath her nome
And than to the souper al and some
Whan time was, ful softe thei hem set
God wot there was no deinte ferre to fet

And after souper gonnen thei to rise
At ease wel, with hart fresh and glade
And wel was him that coude best deuise
To liken her, or that her laughen made
He songe, she plaide, he tolde a tale of Wade
But at the last, as euery thing hath ende
She toke her leaue, and nedes would wende

But o fortune, executrice of wierdes
O influentes of these heuens hie
Soth is, that vnder God ye ben our hierdes
Though to vs beestes, ben the causes wrie
This mene I now, for she gan homward hie
But execute was al beside her leue
At the goddes wil, for whiche she must bleue

The bente Mone with her hornes pale
Saturnus and Ioue, in Cancro ioyned were
That suche a raine from heuen gan auaile
That euery maner woman that was there
Had of that smoky raine a very feere
At which Pandare tho lough, & said thenne
Now were it time a Lady to gone henne

But good nece, if I might euer please
You any thing, than pray I you (ꝙ he)
To don mine hart as now so great an ease
As for to dwell here al this night with me
For why? this is your owne house parde
For by my trouthe, I say it nat in game
To wende as nowe, it were to me a shame

Creseide, which that could as muche good
As halfe a world, toke hede of his praire
And sens it rained, and al was in a flode
She thouzt, as good chepe may I dwel here
And graunt it gladly with a frendes chere
And haue a thōke, as grutche and than abide
For home to gon it may nat well betide

I wol (ꝙ she) mine vncle liefe and dere
Sens that you list, it skil is to be so
I am right glad with you to dwellen here
I said but agame I would go
I wis graunt mercy nece (ꝙ he) tho
Were it agame or no, sothe to tell
Now am I glad, sens that you list to dwell

Thus al is wel, but tho began aright
The newe ioy, and al the fest againe
But Pandarus, if goodly had he might
He would haue hied her to bedde faine
And said, lorde this is an huge raine
This were a wether for to sleepen in
And that I rede vs soone to begin

And nece, wote ye were I wol you laie
For that we shul nat liggen ferre a sonder
And for ye neither shullen, dare I saie
Here noise of raine, ne of thonder
By God right in my closet yonder
And I wol in that vtter house alone
Ben wardain of your women euerichone

And in this middle chambre that ye se
Shal your women slepen, wel and softe
And there I said, shal your seluen be
And if ye liggen wel to night, come ofte
And careth not what wether is a lofte
The wine anone, and whan so you lest
Go we to slepe, I trowe it be the best

There nis no more, but here after sone
Thei voide, dronke, & trauers drawe anone
Gan euery wight that hath nought to done
More in the place, out of the chambre gone
And euer more so stereliche it rone
And blewe therwith so wonderliche loude
That wel nigh no man heren other coulde

Tho

Tho Pandarus her eme, right as him ought
With women, suche as were her most aboute
Ful glad vnto her beddes side her brought
And toke his leaue, and gan ful lowe loute
And said, here at this closet doze without
Right ouertwhart your women liggen all
That whom ye list of hem, ye maie sone call

So whan that she was in the closet laide
And al her women forth by ordinaunce
A bedde weren, there as I haue saide
There nas no moze to shippen noz to praunce
But boden go to bedde with mischaunce
If any wight stering were any where
And let hem slepen, that a bedde were

But Pandarus, that wel couthe eche adele
The olde daunce, and euery point therin
What that he saw that al thing was wele
He thought he wolde vpon his werke begin
And gan the sewe doze al soft vnpin
As stil as a stone, without lenger lette
By Troilus adoun right he him sette

And shortly to the pointe right for to gone
Of al this werke he told him worde and ende
And said, make the redy right anone
For thou shalt into heuen blisse wende
Now blisful Venus, thou me grace sende
(q Troilus) for neuer yet no dede
Had I er now, ne halfendele the drede

(q Pandarus) ne drede the neuer a dele
For it shal be right as thou wolt desire
So thriue I, this night shal I make it wele
Or casten al the gruel in the fire
yet blisful Venus this night thou me enspire
(q Troilus) as wis as I the serue
And euer bet and bet shal til I sterue

And if I had, O Venus ful of mirthe
Aspectes badde of Mars, or of Saturne
Or thou combuste, or let were in my birthe
Thy father pray, al thilke harme disturne
Of grace, and that I glad aien maie turne
For loue of him thou louedest in the shawe
I meane Adon, that with the boze was slawe

Joue eke, for the loue of faire Europe
The which in forme of a bulle awaie thou fet
Now helpe, o Mars, thou vp thy blody cope
For loue of Cipria, thou me naught ne let
O Phebus, thilke whē Daphne her selue shet
Under the barke, and Laurer woze for drede
Yet for her loue, o helpe now at this nede

Mercurie, for the loue of her eke
For which Pallas was wroth Aglauros wrothe
Now helpe, and eke Diane I the beseke
That this viage be nat to the lothe
O fatall sustren, whiche or any clothe
Me shapen was, my destine me sponne
So helpeth to this werke that is begonne

(q Pandarus) thou wretched mouses hert
Art thou agast so that she wol the bite
Why, do on this furred cloke vpon thy sherte
And folowe me, for I wol haue the wite
But bide, and let me gon before a lite
And with that he gan vndone a trappe
And Troilus he brought in by the lappe

The sterne winde so loude gan to route
That no wight other noise might here
And thei that laien at the doze without
Ful sikerly thei slepten all ifere
And Pandarus, with ful sobre chere
Goth to the doze anon without lette
There as thei lay, and soft it shette

And as he came ayen warde priuely
His nece awoke, and asketh, who goeth there?
(My dere nece (q he) it am I
Ne wondreth not, ne haue of it no fere
And nere he came, and said her in her eere
No worde for loue of God I you beseche
Let no wight arise, and heren of our speche

what, whiche waie be ye comen? benedicite,
(q she) and how vnwisse of hem all
Here at this secret trappe doze (q he)
(q tho Creseide) let me some wight call
Eigh, God forbid that it should so fall
(q Pandarus) that ye suche folye wrought
Thei might demen thing thei neuer er thought

It is nat good a sleping honde to wake
Ne yeue a wight a cause for to deuine
Your women slepen al, I vndertake
So that for hem the house men might mine
And slepen wollen till the sunne shine
And when my tale is brought to an ende
Unwist right as I came, so wol I wende

Now nece mine, ye shul well vnderstonde
(q he) so as ye women demen all
That for to holde in loue a man in honde
And him her leke and dere hart call
And maken him an howue aboue a call
I mene, as loue an other in this mene while
She doth her selfe a shame, and him a gile

Now wherby that I tel you al this
ye wote your selfe, as wel as any wight
How that your loue al fully graunted is
To Troilus, the worthiest wight
One of the world, and therto trouth ipligh̄t
That but it were on him alonge, ye nolde
Him neuer fallen, whyle ye liuen shold

Now stonte it thus, that sith I fro you went
This Troilus, right platly for to seine
Is through a gutter by a priuy went
Into my chambre come in al this reine
Unwist of euery maner wight certaine
Saue of my selfe, as wisely haue I ioie
And by the faith I owe to Priam of Troie

And he is come in suche paine and distresse
That but he be al fully woode by this
He sodainly mote fal into woodnesse
But if God helpe: and cause why is this
He saith him tolde is of a frende of his
How ỳ ye should louen one, that hight Horaste
For sorow of whych this night shalbe his laste

Creseide, whiche that al this wonder herde
Gan sodainly aboute her hart colde
And with a sighe she sorowfully answerd
Alas, I wende who so tales tolde
My dere hart would me nat holde
So lightly faulse, alas conceites wrong
What harme thei don: for now liue I to long

Horaste alas, and falsen Troilus
I knowe him not, God helpe me so (q̄ she)
Alas, what wicked spirite tolde him thus
Now certes eme, to morow and I him se
I shal therof as full excusen me
As euer did woman, if him like
And with that worde she gan ful sore sike

O God (q̄ she) so worldly selinesse
Whiche clerkes callen false felicite
Ymedled is with many a bitternesse
Ful anguishous, than is God wote (q̄ she)
Condicion of beine prosperite
For either ioyes comen nat ifere
Or els no wight hath hem al waie here

O brotil wele of mannes ioie vnstable
With what wight so thou be, or ỳ who plaie
Either he wote, that thou ioie art muable
Or wote it nat, it mote ben one of twaie
Now if he wote it nat, how maie he saie
That he hath very ioie and stilenesse
That is of ignorance aie in derkenesse

Now if he wote that ioy is transitorie
As euery ioie of worldly thing mote flie
Than euery time, he that hath in memorie
The drede of ieling, maketh him, that he
May in no parfite liuernesse be
And if to lese his ioie, he set a mite
Than semeth it, that ioy is worthy full lite

Wherfore I wol dissime in this matere
That truely for aught I can espie
There is no very wele in this worlde here
But o thou wicked serpent Ialousie
Thou misbeleued, and enuious folie
Why hast thou Troilus made to me vntrist
That neuer yet agilte, that I wiste

(q̄ Pandarus) thus fallen is this caas
Why vncle mine (q̄ she) who tolde him this
Why doth my dere herte thus, alas:
Ye wote, ye nece min (q̄ he) what is
I hope al shal be wel, that is amis
For ye maie quenche al this, if that you lest
And doeth right so, I holde it for the best

So shal I do to morow, t'wis (q̄ she)
And God toforne, so that it shal suffice
To morow alas, that were faire (q̄ he)
Nay nay, it maie nat stonden in this wise
For nece mine, this writen clerkes wise
That peril is with dretching in drawe
Nay, suche abodes ben nat worthe an hawe

Nece, al thing hath time I dare auowe
For whan a chambre a fire is, or an hall
Wel more nede is, it sodainly rescowe
Than to disputen and aske amonges all
How the candle in the strawe is fall
Ah benedicite, for al among that fare
The harme is done, and farwel feldefare

And nece mine, ne take it nat a grefe
If that ye suffre him al night in this wo
God helpe me so, ye had him neuer lefe
That dare I sain, now there is but we two
But wel I wote that ye wol nat so do
ye ben to wise to done so great folie
To put his life al night in ieopardie

Had I him neuer lefe? By God I wene
Ye had neuer thing so lefe, (q̄ she)
Now by my thrifte (q̄ he) that shall be sene
For sithe ye make this ensample of me
Als sone al night would him in sorowe se
For al the treasour in the toune of Troie
I bidde God, I neuer mote haue ioie

Now

Now loke than, if ye that ben his loue
Should put his life al night in ieopardy
For thing of nought, now de that god aboue
Nat onely this delaie cometh of folie
But of malice, if that I should nat lie
what, platly and ye suffre him in distresse
ye neither bounte done ne gentilnesse

(¶ tho Creseide) wol ye done a thing
And ye therwith shal stinte al his disease
Haue here and bere him this blewe ring
For there is nothing might him better plese
Saue I my selfe, ne more his hart apese
And saie my dere harte, that his sorowe
Is causeles, that shal he sene to morowe

A ringe (¶ he) ye haselwodes shaken
ye nece mine, that ring must haue a stone
That might deed men a liue maken
And suche a ring trowe I that ye haue none
Discrecion out of your heed is gone
That sele I now (¶ he) and that is routhe
O time ilost, wel maist thou cursen slouthe

Wote ye not wel that noble and hie corage
Ne soroweth nat, ne stinteth eke for lite
But if a foole were in a ialous rage
I nolde setten at his sorowe a mite
But sette him with a fewe wordes white
In other daie, whan that I might him finde
But this thing stant al in another kinde

This is so gentle and so tender of harte
That w̄ his death he wol his sorowes wreke
For trust wel, how sore that him smerte
He wol to you no ialous wordes speke
And for thy nece, er that his hart breke
So speke your selfe to him of this matere
For with a worde ye maie his hart stere

Now haue I tolde what peril he is in
And his coming vnwist is to euery wight
Ne parde harme maie there be none, ne sin
I wol my self be with you al this night
Ye knowe eke how it is your owne knight
And that by right, ye must vpon him trifle
And I al prest to fetche him when you liste

This accident so pitous was to here
And eke so like a sothe, at prime face
And Troilus her knight, to her so dere
His priue comming, and the liker place
That though she did him as than a grace
Considred all thinges as thei stode
No wonder is, sens he did al for goode

Creseide answerde, as wisely God at rest
My soule bring, as me is for him wo
And eme i wis, faine would I don the best
If that I a grace had for to do so
But whether that ye dwel, or for him go
I am, til God me better minde sende
At Dulcarnon, right at my wittes ende

(¶ Pandarus) ye nece wol ye here
Dulcarnon is called fleming of wretches
It semeth herd, for wretches wol nought lere
For very slouthe, or other wilfull tetches
This is said by hem, ẏ be not worth two fetches
But ye ben wise, & that ye han on hōde
Nis neither harde, ne skilful to withstonde

Than eme (¶ she) doeth here as you list
But er he come, I wol vp first arise
And for the loue of God, sens al my trist
Is on you two, and ye beth bothe wise
So werketh now, in so discrete a wise
That I honour maie haue, and he plesaunce
For I am here, al in your gouernaunce

That is wel said (¶ he) my nece dere
There good thrifte on that wise gentill harte
But liggeth still, and taketh him right here
It nedeth nat no ferther for him sterte
And eche of you easeth other sorowes smert
For loue of God, and Venus I the herie
For sone hope I, that we shall ben merie

This Troilus full sone on knees him sette
Ful sobrely, right by her beddes heed
And in his beste wise his Lady grette
But lord so she wore sodainliche reed
Ne though men should smiten of her heed
She coulde nat o worde a right out bringe
So sodainly for his sodaine cominge

But Pandarus, that so wel coulde fele
In euery thing, to plaie anon began
And said, nece, se how this Lord gan knele
Now for your trouth, se this gentil man
And with that worde, he for a quishen ran
And said kneleth now while that thou leste
There God your hartes bring sone at reste

Can I naught sain, for she bad him nat rise
If sorowe it put out of her remembraunce
Or els that she toke it in the wise
Of duetie, as for his obseruaunce
But well finde I, she did him this plesaunce
That she him kist, al though she liked sore
And bad him sit adoun without en more

(q Pandarus) now wol ye well begin
Now doth him sitte, good nece dere
Upon your beddes side, al there within
That eche of you the bet maie other here
And with that worde he drew him to the fiere
And toke a light, & founde his countenaunce
As for to loke upon an olde romaunce

Creseide that was Troilus lady right
And there stode in a grounde of sikernesse
All thought she her seruaunt and her knight
Ne should none untrouthe in her gesse
That natheless, considred his distresse
And that loue is in cause of suche folie
Thus to him spake she of his ialousie

Lo hert mine, as would the excellence
Of loue, aienst the whiche that no man maie
Ne ought eke goodly maken resistence
And eke bicause I felte wel and saie
Your great trouth, and seruice euery daie
And that your hart al min was, loth to saine
This droue me for to rewe upon your paine

And your goodnes haue I founden alway yet
Of whiche my dere hert, and al my knight
I thanke it you, as ferre as I haue wit
Al can I nat as much as it were right
And I emforth my conning and my might
Haue, and aie shal, how sore that me smert
Ben to you trew and hole with all mine hert

And dredelesse that shal be founden at preue
But hert mine, what al this is to saine
Shal well be told, so that ye nought you greue
Though I to you right on your self cõplaine
For there with meane I finally paine
That halte your hart and mine in heuinesse
Fully to slaine, and euery wrong redresse

My good mine, not I, for why ne how
That ielously alas, that wicked wiuere
Thus causeles is cropen into you
The harme of whiche I would faine deliuere
Als, that he all hole or of him sliuere
Should haue his refute in so digne a place
That Ioue, him sone out of your hart race

But o thou, o auctour of nature
Is this an honour to thy dignite
That folke vngilty suffren here iniure
And who that gilty is, al quite goeth he
O were it lefull for to plaine of the
That vndeserued suffrest ialousie
O, that I would upon the plaine and crie

Eke al my wo is this, that folke now sien
To saine right thus: ye, ialousie is loue
And would a bushel of venim al excusen
For that a grane of loue is on it shoue
But that wote high Ioue that sit aboue
If it be liker loue, hate, or grame
And after that it ought beare his name

But certaine is, some maner ialousie
Is excusable, more than some iwis
As whan cause is, and some suche fantasie
With pite so wel expressed is
That it vneth doeth or saith amis
But goodly drinketh up al his distresse
And that excuse I for the gentilnesse

And some so ful of fury is, and dispite
That it surmounteth his repression
But hart mine, ye be nat in that plite
That thonke I God, for whiche your passion
I wol nat cal it but illusion
Of haboundance of loue, and besy cure
That doth your hart this disese endure

Of whiche I am sory, but nat wrothe
But for my deuoir and your hartes reste
Where so you list, by ordal or by othe
By sorte, or in what wise so you leste
For loue of God, let preue it for the beste
And if that I be gilty, do me die
Alas, what might I more done or seie

With that a fewe bright teeres newe
Out of her eien fel, and thus she seide
Now God ỹ wost, in thought ne dede vntrewe
To Troilus was neuer yet Creseide
With that her heed doun in the bed she leide
And with the shete it wrigh, and sighed sore
And held her pece, nat a word spake she more

But now helpe God, to quench al this sorow
So hope I that he shal, for he beste may
For I haue sene of a ful misty morow
Folowen ful oft a mery somers day
And after winter foloweth grene May
Men sene alday, and reden eke in stories
That after sharpe shoures ben victories

This Troilus, when he her wordes herde
Haue ye no care, him list nat to slepe
For it thought him no strokes of a yerde
To here or se Creseide his lady wepe
But wel he felte about his harte crepe
For euery teare whiche that Creseide asterte
The crampe of deth, to straine him by ỹ herte

And

And in his minde he gan the time acurse
That he came there, and that he was borne
For now is wicke tourned into worse
And all that labour he hath doen beforne
He wende it lost, he thought he nas but lorne
O Pandarus thought he, alas thy wile
Serueth of nought, so wela waie the while.

And therwithall he hing adoun his hedde
And fell on knees, and sorowfully he sight
What might he sain? he felt he nas but dedde
For wroth was she ẏ should his sorowes light
But natheless, whan that he speaken might
Than said he thus, God wote ẏ of this game
Whan all is wist, than am I nat to blame.

Therwith the sorowe of his harte shet
That from his yen fell there nat a tere
And euery spirite his vigour in knet
So thei astonied or oppressed were
The feling of sorowe, or of his fere
Or of aught els, fledde were out of toune
Adoune he fell all sodainly in swoune.

This was no little sorowe for to se
But all was husht, and Pandare vp as fast
O nece peace, or we be lost (q he)
Bethe nat agast, but certain at last
For this or that, he into bedde him cast
And said, O theue, is this a mannes herte
And of he rent all to his bare sherte.

And said nece, but ye helpe vs now
Alas, your owne Troilus is lorne
I wis so would I, and I wist how
Full fain (q she) alas that I was borne
Ye nece, will ye pullen out the thorne
That sticheth in his harte (q Pandare)
Saie all forgeue, and stint is all this fare.

Ye that to me (q she) full leuer were
Than all the good the Sunne about goeth
And therwithall she swore him in his eare
I wis my dere harte I am not wrothe
Haue here my trouth, & many an other othe
Now speake to me, for it am I Creseide
But all for naught, yet might he nat abreide

Ther w his poulce, & paumes of his hondes
Thei gan to frote, & wete his temples twain
And to deliuer him fro bitter bondes
She oft him kist, and shortly for to sain
Him to rewaken she did all her pain
And at the last he gan his breath to drawe
And of his swough sone after that adawe.

And gan bet minde, and reason to him take
But wonder sore he was abashed i wis
And with a sigh whan he gan bet awake
He said, O mercie God, what thing is this?
Why doe ye with your seluen thus amis?
(q tho Creseide) is this a mannes game
What Troilus, will ye doe thus for shame?

And therwithall her arme ouer him she laied
And all forgaue, and oft time him kest
He thonked her, and to her spake and said
As still to purpose, for his hartes rest
And she to that answerde him as her lest
And with her goodlie wordes him dispost
She gan, and oft his sorowes to comfort.

(q Pandarus) for aught I can aspied
This light nor I ne seruen here of naught
Light is nat good for like folkes yes
But for the loue of god, sens ye been brought
In this good plite, let now non heuy thought
Been hanged in the hartes of you twey
And bare the candle to the chimney.

Sone after this, though it no nede were
Whan she soche othes as her list deuise
Had of hem take, her thought tho no fere
Ne cause eke none, to bid him thens rise
Yet lesse thing than othes maie suffice
In many a case, for euery wight I gesse
That loueth well, meaneth but gentilnesse.

But in effect she would wete anon
Of what man, and eke where, and why
He ialous was, sens there was cause non
And eke the signe that he toke it by
She bade him that to tell her busily
Or els certain she bare him on honde
That this was doen of malice her to fonde.

Withouten more, shortly for to sain
He must obeie vnto his ladies hest
And for the lasse harme he must fain
He said her, whan she was at soche a fest
She might on him haue loked at the lest
Not I nat what, all dere inough a riche
As he that nedes must a cause liche.

And she answerde, swete, all were it so
What harme was ẏ, sens I non euill meane
For by that God that bought vs bothe two
In all thing is mine entent cleane
Soche argumentes ne be nat worth a beane
Will ye thy childishe ialous counterfete
Now were it worthy that ye were ibete.

Tho Troilus gan sorowfully to sike
Lest she be wrothe, him thought his hart deide
And saied, alas, vpon my sorowes like
Haue mercie swete harte mine Cresseide
And if that in tho wordes that I seide
Be any wrong, I woll no more trespace
Doeth what you list, I am all in your grace.

And she answerde, of gilt misericorde
That is to saine, that I forgeue all this
And euermore on this night you recorde
And bethe well ware ye doe no more amis
Naie derc harte mine (quod she) iwis
And now (quod she) that I haue you doe smarte
Forgeue it me, mine owne swete harte.

This Troilus with blisse of that supprised
Put all in Goddes hande, as he that ment
Nothing but well, and sodainly auised
Hether in armes fast to him hent
And Pandarus, with a full good entent
Laied him to slepe, and saied, if ye be wise
Sweueneth not now, lest more folke arise.

What might or maie the sely Larke saie
Whā that the sparhauke hath him in his fote
I can no more, but of these ilke twaie
To whom this tale sugre be or sote
Though I tary a yere, somtime I mote
After mine aucthour tellen her gladnesse
As well as I haue tolde her heuinesse.

Cresseide, whiche that felte her thus itake
(As writen clerkes in her bokes old)
Right as an aspen lefe she gan to quake
Whan she him felt her in his armes fold
But Troilus all hole of cares cold
Gan thanken tho the blisfull Goddes seuen
Through sondry paines to bring folk to heuē

This Troilus in armes gan her straine
And saied swete, as euer mote I gone
Now be ye caught, here is but we twaine
Now yeldeth you, for other boote is none
To that Cresseide answerde thus anone
Ne had I er now, my swete harte dere
Been yolde iwis, I were now not here.

O soth is saied, that healed for to be
As of a feuer, or other greate sickenesse
Men must drinken, as we oft se
Full bitter drinke, and for to haue gladnesse
Men drinken oft pain, and greate distresse
I meane it here by, as for this auenture
That through a pain hath foundē al his cure

And now swetnesse semeth more swete
That bitternesse assaied was biforne
For out of wo in blisse now thei flete
Non soche thei felten sens thei were borne
Now is this bet, than bothe two be lorne
For loue of God, take euery woman hede
To werken thus, if it come to the nede.

Cresseide all quite from euery drede and tene
As she that iust cause had him to trist
Made him soche feast, it ioie was to sene
Whan she is trouth and cleane entent wist
And as about a tree with many a twist
Bitrent and writhe the swete Wodbinde
Can eche of hem in armes other winde.

And as the newe abashed Nightingale
That stinteth first, whan she beginneth sing
Whan that she heareth any heerdes tale
Or in the hedges any wight stearing
And after liker doeth her voice out ring
Right so Cresseide, whan her drede stent
Opened her hart, and told him her entent.

And right as he that seeth his death ishapen
And dien mote, in aught that he maie gesse
And sodainly rescous doeth him escapen
And from his death is brought in sikernesse
For al this worlde, in soche present gladnesse
Was Troilus, and hath his lady swete
With worse hap God let vs neuer mete.

Her armes small, her streight backe and soft
Her sides long, fleshly, smothe, and white
He gan to stroke, and good thrift bad full oft
Her snowisse throte, her brestes roūd and lite
Thus in this heauen he gan him to delite
And therwithall a thousande times her kist
That what to doen for ioie vnneth he wist.

Than saied he thus, O Loue, O Charite
Thy mother eke, Citheria the swete
That after thy self, next yeried be she
Venus I meane, the well willy planete
And next that, Imeneus I thee grete
For neuer man was to you Goddes hold
As I, whiche ye haue brought fro cares cold.

Benigne Loue, thou holy bonde of thingen
Who so woll grace, and list ther not honouren
Lo, his desire woll flie withouten wingen
For noldest thou of bounte hem socouren
That seruen best, and moste alwaie labouren
Yet were all lost, that dare I well sain certes
But if thy grace passed our desertes.

And

And for thou me that lest thōke coud deserue
Of hem that nombred been vnto thy grace
Hast holpen, there I likely was to sterue
And me bestowed in so high a place
That thilke boundes maie no blisse pace
I can no more, but laude and reuerence
Be to thy bounte and thine excellence.

And therwithall Creseide anon he kist
Of whiche certain she felt no disease
And thus saied he, now would God I wist
Mine harte swete, how I you might please
What man (q̄ he) was euer thus at ease
As I: On whiche the fairest, and the best
That euer I seie, deineth her to rest.

Heremaie mē seen that mercie passeth right
The experience of that is felt in me
That am vnworthy to so swete a wight
But harte mine, of your benignite
So thinke, that though I vnworthy be
Yet mote I nede amenden in some wise
Right through the vertue of your hie seruice

And for the loue of God my lady dere
Sith he hath wrouzt me for I shal you serue
As thus I meane: woll ye be my fere
To doe me liue, if that you list or sterue
So teacheth me, how that I maie deserue
Your thonke, so ẏ I through min ignoraunce
Ne doe nothing that you be displeasaunce.

For certes fresshe womanliche wife
This dare I saie, that trouth and diligence
That shall ye finden in me all my life
Ne I woll not certain breaken your defence
And if I doe, present or in absence
For loue of God, let slea me with the dede
If that it like vnto your womanhede.

I wis (q̄ she) mine owne hartes lust
My ground of ease, and al mine harte dere
Graunt mercie, for on that is all my trust
But let vs fall awaie fro this mattere
For it suffiseth, this that said is here
And at o worde, without repentaunce
Welcome my knizt, my peace, my suffisaunce

Of her delite or ioies, one of the least
Were impossible to my wit to saie
But iudgeth ye, that haue been at the feast
Of soche gladnesse, if that him list plaie
I can no more, but thus these ilke twaie
That night, betwixen drede and sikernesse
Felten in loue the greate worthinesse.

O blissfull night, of hem so long isought
How blithe vnto hem bothe two thou were?
Why ne had I soche feast w̄ my soule ibrouzt?
Ye, or the least ioie that was there
Awaie thou foule daunger and thou fere
And let hem in this heauen blisse dwell
That is so high, that all ne can I tell.

But sothe is, though I can not tellen all
As can mine aucthour of his excellence
Yet haue I saied, and God toforne shall
In euery thing all holly his sentence
And if that I, at loues reuerence
Haue any worde in eched for the best
Doeth therwithall right as your seluen lest.

For my wordes here, and euery part
I speake hem all vnder correction
Of you that feling haue in loues art
And put it all in your discrecion
To entreate or make diminicion
Of my langage, and that I you beseche
But now to purpose of my rather speche.

These ilke two that been in armes laft
So lothe to hem a sonder gon it were
That eche from other wenden been biraft
Or els lo, this was her moste fere
That all this thing but nice dreames were
For whiche full oft eche of hem said, o swete
Clippe I you thus, or els doe I it mete.

And Lorde so he gan goodlie on her se
That neuer his loke ne blent from her face
And saied, O dere harte maie it be
That it be sothe, that ye been in this place
Ye harte mine, God thanke I of his grace
(q̄ tho Creseide) and therwithall him kist
That where here spirite was, for ioie she nist

This Troilus full oft her iyen two
Gan for to kisse, and saied: O iyen clere
It weren ye that wrought me soche wo
Ye humble nettes of my ladie dere
Though there be mercie writtē in your chere
God wote the text full harde is for to finde
How coud ye, withouten bonde me binde.

Therwith he gan her fast in armes take
And well an hundred times gan he sike
Not soche sorowfull sighes as men make
For wo, or els whan that folke be sike
But easie sighes, soche as been to like
That shewed his affection within
Of soche sighes could he not blin.

Sone

Sone after this, thei spake of sodrie thinges
As till to purpose of this auenture
And playyng, enterchaungeden her ringes
Of whiche I can not tellen no scripture
But well I wot, a brooche of gold and assure
In whiche a Rubbie set was like an herte
Creseide him yaue, and stacke it on his sherte

Lorde trowe ye that a coueitous wretche
That blameth loue, and halte of it dispite
That of tho pens that he can muckre & hetche
Was euer yet yeue to him soche delite
As is in loue, in o poinct in some plite
Naie doubtlesse, for also God me saue
So parfite ioie naie no nigard haue.

Thei woll saie yes, but Lorde so thei lie
Tho busie wretches full of wo and drede
That callen loue a woodnesse of folie
But it shall fall hem, as I shall you rede
Thei shall forgon the white and eke the rede
And liue in wo, there God yeue hē mischaūce
And euery louer in his trouthe auaunce

As would God tho wretches, that dispise
Seruice of loue, had eares also long
As had Mida, full of couetise
And therto dronken had as hotte and strong
As Cresus did, for his affectes wrong
To teachen hem, that thei been in the vice
And louers not, although thei hold hem nice

These ilke two, of whom that I you saie
whan that her hartes well assured were
Tho gonnen thei to speake and to plaie
And eke rehearcen how, whan, and where
Thei knewe first, and euery wo or fere
That passed was, but all soche heuinesse
I thonke it God, was tourned to gladnesse.

And euermore, whan that hem fell to speake
Of any thing of soche a time agone
with killing all that tale should breake
And fallen into a newe ioie anone
And didden all her might, sens thei were one
For to recoueren blisse, and been at ease
And paised wo with ioie counterpaise.

Reason woll not that I speake of slepe
For it accordeth not to my mattere
God wote thei toke of it full little kepe
But lest this night that was to hem so dere
Ne should in baine escape in no manere
It was biset in ioie and businesse
Of all that louneth into gentilnesse.

But whan the cocke, commune Astrologe
Gan on his brest to beate, and after crowe
And Lucifer, the daies messanger
Gan for to rise, and out her beames throwe
And Estward rose, to him that could it knowe
Fortuna maior, that anone Creseide
With harte sore, to Troilus thus seide.

Mine hartes life, my trust, al my pleasaunce
That I was borne alas, that me is wo
That daie of vs mote make disseueraunce
For time it is to rise, and hence go
Or els I am lost for euer mo
O night alas, why nilt thou ouer vs houe
As long as whan Alcmena laie by Joue.

O blacke night, as folke in bokes rede
That shapen art by God, this worlde to hide
At certain times, with thy derke wede
That vnder that men might in rest abide
Wel oughten beastes to plain, & folke to chide
That there as daie with labor would vs brest
That thou thus fliest, and deinest vs not rest.

Thou doest alas, to shortly thine office
Tho rakle night, there God maker of kinde
Thee for thine hast, and thine vnkinde vice
So fast aie to our him isperie binde
That neuermore vnder ỹ ground thou winde
For now for thou so highest out of Troie
Haue I forgone thus hastely my ioie.

This Troilus, that with tho wordes felt
As thought him tho, for pitous distresse
The bloodie teares from his harte melt
As he that yet neuer soche heuinesse
Assaied had, out of so greate gladnesse
Gan therwithall Creseide his lady dere
In armes strain, and hold in louely manere.

O cruell daie, accuser of the ioie
That night and loue haue stole, & false iwisse
Accursed be thy comming into Troie
For euery bore hath one of thy bright iyen
Enuious daie, what list thee so to spien
what hast thou lost, why seekest ỹ this place?
There God thy light so quench for his grace.

Alas, what haue these louers thee agilt?
Dispitous daie, thine be the paine of hell
For many a louer hast thou slain, and wilt
Thy poring in woll no where let hem dwell
what profrest thou thy light heare for to sell?
Go sell it hem that smale seales graue
We woll thee not, vs nedeth no daie haue.

And

And eke the soonne Titan gan he chide
And said, O foole, well maie men thee dispise
That hast all night the dauning by thy side
And suffrest her so sone vp fro thee rise
For to disease vs louers in this wise
What hold your bed, there thou & thy morow
I bid God so yeue you bothe sorowe.

Therwith full sore he sighed, & thus he seide
My lady right, and of my weale or wo
The well and roote, O goodly mine Creseide
And shall I rise alas, and shall I so
Now sele I that mine harte mote a two
And how should I my life an houre saue
Sens that with you is all the life I haue.

What shall I doen? For certes I not how
Ne whan alas, I shall the time se
That in this plite I maie been eft with you
And of my life God wote how shall that be
Sens that desire right now so biteth me
That I am dedde anon, but I retourne
How should I long alas, fro you sojourne?

But natheless, mine owne ladie bright
Were it so that I wist vtterly
That your hūble seruaunt, and your knight
Were in your harte iset so fermely
As ye in mine, the whiche truely
Me leauer were than these worldes twain
Yet should I bet enduren all my pain.

To that Creseide answerde right anon
And with a sigh she saied, O harte dere
The game iwis so ferforth now is gon
That first shall Phebus fallē from the sphere
And eueriche Egle been the Douues fere
And euery rocke out of this place sterte
Er Troilus go out of Creseides herte.

Ye been so depe within mine harte graue
That tho I would it turne out of my thought
As wisely very God my soule saue
To dien in the pain, I could nought
And for the loue of God, ȳ vs hath wrought
Let in your brain none other fantasie
So crepe, that it cause me to die.

And that ye me would haue as fast in minde
As haue you that would I you beseche
And if I wist sothly that to finde
God might not apoinct my ioies eche
But harte mine, withouten more speche
Bethe to me true, or els were it routhe
For I am thine, by God and by my trouthe.

Bethe glad for thy, and liue in siker nesse
Thus saied I neuer er this, ne shall to mo
And if to you it were a greate gladnesse
To tourne ayen sone after that ye go
As faine would I as ye, it were so
As wisely God mine harte bring to reste
And him in armes take, and oft keste.

Ayenst his will, sithe it mote nedes be
This Troilus vp rose and fast him cled
And in his armes toke his ladie free
An hundred times, and on his waie him sped
And with soche wordes, as his harte bled
He saied: fare well my dere harte swete
That God vs graunt sound and sone to mete

To whiche no worde for sorowe she answerd
So sore gan his parting her distrain
And Troilus vnto his Paleis ferd
As wo bigon as she was, sothe to saine
So harde him wrōg of sharpe desire the pain
For to been eft there he was in pleasaunce
That it may neuer out of his remembraunce

Retourned to his roiall paleis sone
He soft vnto his bedde gan for to sinke
To slepe long, as he was wont to doen
But all for nauȝt, he maie wel ligge & winke
But slepe maie there none in his harte sinke
Thinking how she, for whō desire him brende
Al N. folde was worth more than he wende.

And in his thought, gan vp & doun to wende
Her wordes all, and euery countenaunce
And fermely impressen in his minde
The lest poincte, that to him was pleasaunce
And verely of thilke remembraunce
Desire al newe him brende, and lust to brede
Gan more than erst, and yet toke he non hede.

Creseide also, right in the same wise
Of Troilus gan in her harte set
His worthinesse, his lust, his deedes wise
His gentilnesse, and how she with him met
Thonking loue, he so weil her beset
Desiring oft to haue her harte dere
In soche a place as she durst make him chere

Pandare a morowe, which that cōmen was
Vnto his nece, and gan her faire grete
And said, all this night so rained it alas
That all my drede is, that ye nece swete
Haue little leiser had to slepe and mete
All this night (ȳ he) hath rain so do me wake
That some of vs I trowe her heddes ake.

And

And nere he came and said, how stant it now
This merie morowe, nece how can ye fare
Creseide answerde, neuer the bet for you
Fore that ye been, God yeue your harte care
God helpe me so, ye caused all this fare
Trowe I (q she) for all your wordes white
O who so seeth you, knoweth you full lite.

With that she gan her face for to wrie
With the shete and wore for shame all redde
And Pandarus gan vnder for to prie
And saied nece, if that I shall been dedde
Haue here a swerde, and smiteth of my hedde
With that his arme, all sodainly he thrist
Under her necke, and at the last her kist.

I passe al that, which chargeth naught to say
What, God forgaue his death, and she also
Forgaue: and with her vncle gan to plaie
For other cause was there none than so
But of this thing right to the effect to go
Whan time was, home to her house she went
And Pandarus hath fully his entent.

Now tourne we ayen to Troilus
That restlesse full long a bedde laie
And priuely sent after Pandarus
To him to come in all the hast he maie
He come anon, not ones saied he naie
And Troilus full soberly he grete
And doune vpon the beddes sides him sete.

This Troilus with all thaffectioun
Of frendly loue, that harte maie deuise
To Pandarus on knees fill adoune
And er that he would of the place arise
He gan him thanken on his best wise
An hundred time he gan the time blesse
That he was borne, to bring him to distresse.

He said, O frende of frendes, the alderbest
That euer was, the sothe for to tell
Thou hast in heauē ibrought my soule at rest
Fro Phlegeton the firie flood of hell
That though I might a thousande times sel
Upon a daie my life in thy seruice
It might not a mote in that suffice.

The sonne, whiche that al the worlde raie se
Sawe neuer yet my life, that dare I leie
So ioily, faire, and goodly, as is she
Whose I am all, and shall till that I deie
And that I thus am hers, dare I seie
That thanked be the high worthinesse
Of loue, and eke thy kinde businesse.

Thus hast thou me no little thing ieue
For why to thee obliged be for aie
My life, & why: for through thine help I liue
Or els dedde had I been ago many a daie
And with that worde doun in his bed he laie
And Pandarus full soberly him herde
Till all was said, and than he him answerde

My dere frende, if I haue doen for thee
In any case, God wote it is me lefe
And am as glad as man maie of it be
God helpe me so, but take now not agrife
That I shall saine, beware of this mischife
That there as now brought art to thy blisse
That thou thy self, ne cause it not to misse.

For of fortunes sharpe aduersite
The worste kinde of infortune is this
A man to haue been in prosperite
And it remember, whan it passed is
Thou art wise inough, for thy doe nat amis
Be not to rakell, though thou sit warme
For if thou be, certain it woll thee harme.

Thou art at ease, and hold thee well therin
For also sure as redde is euery fire
As greate a crafte is to kepe well as winne
Bridle alwaie well thy speach and thy desire
For worldly ioie holdeth not but by a wire
That preueth well, it brest aldaie so ofte
For thy neede is to werken with it softe.

(q Troilus) I hope, and God to forme
My dere frende, that I shall so me bere
That in my gilt ther shal nothing been lorne
Ne I will not rakle, as for to greuen here
It nedeth not this matter ofte tere
For wistest thou mine harte wel Pandare
God wote of this thou wouldest lite care.

Tho gan he tell him of his glad night
And whereof first his hart dradde, and how
And saied frende, as I am true knight
And by that faithe I owe to God and you
I had it neuer halfe so hote as now
And aie the more that desire me biteth
To loue her best, the more it me deliteth.

I not my self not wisely, what it is
But now I feele a newe qualite
Ye all an other than I did er this
Pandare answered and saied thus, that he
That ones maie in heauen blisse be
He feeleth other waies dare I laie
Than thilke time he first heard of it saie.

This

This is a worde for al, that Troilus
Was neuer ful to speke of this matere
And for to praisen vnto Pandarus
The bounte of his right lady dere
And Pandarus to thanke, and maken chere
This tale was al span newe to beginne
Til that the night departed hem a twinne

But nedes daie departe hem must sone
And whan her speche don was, and her chere
Thei twin anon, as thei were wont to done
And setten time of meting efte isere
And many a nizt thei wrouzt in this manere
And thus fortune a time ladde in ioie
Creseide, and eke this kinges son of Troie.

Soone after this, for that fortune it would
I comen was the blisful time I wete
That Troilus was warned, that he should
There he was erst, Creseide his lady mete
For whiche he felte his herte in ioie flete
And faithfully gan al the goddes hery
And let se now, if that he can be mery

In suffisaunce, in blisse, and in singinges
This Troilus gan al his life to lede
He spendeth, iusteth, and maketh feestinges
He geueth frely ofte, and chaungeth wede
He helde about him alwaie out of drede
A world of folke, as come him well of kinde
The freshest, and the best he coulde finde

And holden was the forme, and al the gise
Of her comming, and of his also
As it was erst, whiche nedeth nought deuise
But plainly to theffecte right for to go
In ioie and surete Pandarus hem two
A bedde brought, whan hem bothe lest
And thus thei ben in quiete and in rest

That suche a voice was of him, and a steuen
Throughout ẏ world, of honour and largesse
That it by ronge vnto the yate of Heuen
And as in loue he was in suche gladnesse
That in his hart he demed, as I gesse
That there nis louer in this world at ease
So wel as he, and thus gan loue him please.

Naught nedeth it to you, sithe thei ben met
To aske at me, if that thei blithe were
For if it erst was well, tho was it bet
A thousande folde, this nedeth not enquere
I go was euery sorow and euery fere
And bothe iwis thei had, and so thei wende
As moche ioie as harte maie comprehende

The goodlihede or beaute, whiche ẏ kinde
In any other lady had isette
Can not the moütenaunce of a gnat vnbinde
About his hert, of al Creseides nette
He was so narowe imasked, and iknette
That is vndon in any maner side
That nil nat ben, for aught that maie betide

This nis no litel thing of for to sey
This passeth euery wit for to deuise
For eche of hem gan others lust obey
Felicite, whiche that these clerkes wise
Commenden so, ne may not here suffise
This ioye ne maie not iwritten be with inke
This passeth al that hart maie bethinke

And by the honde ful ofte he would take
This Pandarus, and into gardin lede
And suche a feest, and suche a proceste make
Him of Creseide, and of her womanhede
And of her beaute, that withouten drede
It was an heuen his wordes for to here
And than he would sing in this manere

But cruel day, so wela way the stounde
Gan for to approche, as thei by signes knewe
For whiche hem thought felē dethes wounde
So wo was hem, that chaūgen gan her hewe
And day thei gonnen to dispise al newe
Calling it traitour, enuious and worse
And bitterly the daies light thei corse

Loue, that of erthe ⁊ sea hath gouernaunce
Loue, that his heestes hath in heuen hie
Loue, that with an holsome aliaunce
Halte people ioyned, as him liste hem gie
Loue, that knitteth lawe and companie
And couples doth in vertue for to dwel
Binde this accorde, that I haue tolde and tel

(ẏ Troilus) alas, now am I ware
That Phebus, and tho swifte stedes thre
Whiche that drawen forth the sunnes chare
Hau gon some by pathe in dispite of me
And maketh it so sone day to be
And for the sunne him hasteth thus to rise
Ne shal I neuer don him sacrifise

That, ẏ the world ẇ faith, whiche ẏ is stable
Diuerseth so his stoundes according
That elementes that bethe discordable
Holden a bonde, perpetually during
That Phebus mote his rosy day forth bring
And ẏ the mone hath lordship ouer ẏ nightes
Al this doeth loue, aie heried be his mightes

That, that the sea, that gredy is to flowen
Constraineth to a certaine ende so
His floodes, that so fiersly thei ne growen
To drenchen earthe and al for euermo
And if that loue aught let his bridel go
Al that now loueth a sonder should lepe
And lost were al, that loue halt nowe to hepe

So would to god, that authour is of kinde
That with his bonde, loue of his vertue list
To serchen hertes al, and fast binde
That frō his bōde no wight the wey out wist
And hertes colde hem, wold I that hem twist
To maken hem loue, & that list hem aie rewe
On hartes sore, and kepe hem that ben trewe

In al nedes for the tounes warre
He was, and aie the first in armes dight
And certainly, but if that bokes erre
Saue Hector, most idradde of any wight
And this encrease of hardinesse and might
Come him of loue, his ladies thanke to win
That altered his spirite so within

In time of truce on hauking would he ride
Or els hunt Bore, Beare, or Lioun
The smal bestes let he gon beside
And whan that he come riding into the toun
Ful oft his lady from her window doun
As fresh as faucon, comen out of mue
Ful redely was him goodly to salue

And most of loue and vertue was his speche
And in dispite had al wretchednesse
And doutlesse no nede was him beseche
To honouren hem, that had worthinesse
And easen hem, that weren in distresse
And glad was he, if any wight wel ferde
That louer was, whan he it wist or herde

For sothe to saine, he lost helde euery wight
But if he were in loues high seruice
I meane folke that aught it ben of right
And ouer al this, so wel couldе he deuise
Of sentement, and in so vnsouthe wise
Al his array, that euery louer thought
That al was well, what so he said or wrought

And though that he be come of blode royal
Him list of pride, at no wight for to chace
Benigne he was to eche in general
For which he gate him thanke in euery place
Thus would loue, theried by his grace
That pride and Ire, Enuie, and Auarice
He gan to flie, and euery other vice

Thou lady bright, the doughter of Diane
Thy blinde & winged sonne eke dan Cupide
Ye sustren nine eke, that by Helicone
In hil Pernaso, listen for to abide
That ye thus ferre han deined me to gide
I can more, but sens that ye wol wende
Ye heried ben for aie withouten ende

Through you haue I said fully in my song
The effecte and ioie of Troilus seruice
Al be that there was some disease among
As mine auctour listeth to deuise
My thirde boke now ende I in this wise
And Troilus in luste and in quiete
Is with Creseide, his owne hert swete

Explicit liber tertius.

But all to litell, wela way the while
Lasteth suche ioye, ithonked be fortune
That semeth trewest, whan she wol begile
And can to fooles her longe entune
That she hem hent, & blent traitour cōmune
And whan a wight is frō her whele ithrowe
Than laugheth she, & maketh him the mowe

From Troilus she gan her bright face
Away to writhe, and toke of him non hede
And caste him clene out of his ladies grace
And on her whele she set vp Diomede
For which min hert right now ginneth blede
And now my pen alas, with which I write
Quaketh for drede, of that I must endite

For how Creseide Troilous forsoke
Or at the lest, how that she was vnkinde
Mote hence forthe, ben mater of my boke
As writē folke, through which it is in minde
Alas that thei should euer cause finde
To speke her harme, and if thei on her lie
I wis hem selfe should haue the vilanie

O ye Herines nightes doughters three
That endelesse complaine euer in paine
Megera, Allecto, and eke Tesiphonee
Thou cruel Mars eke, father of Quirine
This ilke fourth boke helpe me to fine
So that the loos, and loue, and life ifere
Of Troilus be fully shewed here

Incipit liber quartus.

Ligging

Lygging in host, as I haue
saide er this
The Grekes strong, about
Troie toune
Bifell, that whan that
Phebus shining is
Upon the breste of Hercu-
les Lion
That Hector, with many a bolde Baron
Cast on a daie with Grekes for to fight
As he was wont, to greue hem what he mizt

Not I how long or short it was bitwene
This purpose, and that day thei fightē mente
But on a daie wel armed bright and shene
Hector and many a worthy knight out wente
With speare in honde, & bigge bowes bente
And in the berde withouten lenger lette
Her fomen in the felde anon hem mette

The long day with speares sharpe igrounde
With arowes, dartes, swerdes, and maces fel
Thei fight, & bringē horse, & man to grounde
And with her ares out the braines quel
But in the last shoure, sothe to tel
The folke of Troie hem seluen so misleden
That with ẏ worse at night home thei fleden

At whiche day was taken Anthenor
Maugre Polimidas, or Monesteo
Xanttippe Sarpedon, Palestinor
Polite, or eke the Troyan dan Rupheo
And other lasse folke, as Phebuseo
So that for harme ẏ daie the folke of Troie
Dreden to lese a great parte of her ioie

Of Priamus was yeue, at grekes request
A time of truce, and tho thei gonnen trete
Her prisoners to chaungen most and lest
And for the surplus yeuen sommes grete
This thing anon was couthe in euery strete
Bothe in thassege, in toun, and euery where
And with the first it came to Calcas eere

Whē Calcas knew this tretise should helde
In consistorie amonge the Grekes sone
He gan in thringe, forthe with lordes olde
And set him there as he was wont to done
And with a chaunged face, hem bade abone
For loue of God, to done that reuerence
To stinten noise, and yeue him audience

Than said he thus, lo lordes mine I was
Troyan, as it is knowen out of drede
And if that you remembre, I am Calcas
That alderfist yaue comfort to your nede
And tolde wel howe that you should spede
For dredelesse through you shal in a stounde
Ben Troie ibrent, and beaten doun to groūde

And in what forme, or in what maner wise
This toun to shende, and al your lust atcheue
Ye haue er this wel herde me deuise
This know ye my lordes, as I leue
And for the Grekes weren me so leue
I came my selfe in my proper persone
To teche in this, how you was best to done

Hauing vnto my treasour, ne my rent
Right no regarde in respecte of your ease
Thus al my good I lefte, and to you went
Wening in this you lordes for to please
But al that losse ne doth me no disease
I vouchsafe, as wisely haue I ioie
For you to lese, al that I haue in Troie

Saue of a doughter that I lefte, alas!
Sleping at home, when out of Troie I stert
O sterne, O cruel father that I was
Howe might I haue in that so hard an hert?
Alas that I ne had brought her in my shert
For sorow of which I wol nat liue to morow
But if ye lordes rewe vpon my sorow

For bicause that I sawe no time er now
Her to deliuer, iche holden haue my pees
But now or neuer, if that it like you
I may her haue right nowe doutlees
O helpe and grace, among al this prees
Rewe on this olde caitife in distresse
Sith I through you haue all this heuinesse

Ye haue now caught, and fettred in prison
Troyans inowe, and if your willes be
My childe with one may haue redemption
Now for the loue of God, and of bounte
One of so fele alas, so yefe him me
What nede were it this praier for to werne
Sith ye shul haue, both folke & toune as yern

On peril of my life I shal nat lie
Apollo hath me tolde ful faithfully
I haue eke founde by astronomy
By sort, and by augury trewely
And dare wel saie the time is fast by
That fire & flambe on all the toun shal sprede
And thus shal Troie turne to ashen dede

For certaine Phebus, and Neptunus bothe
That makeden the walles of the toun

Ben with the folke of Troie alwaie so wroth
That thei wol bring it to confusioun
Right in dispite of king Lamedoun
Bicause he nolde paien hem her hire
The toune of Troie shal ben set on fire

Telling his tale alway this olde grey
Humble in his speche and loking eke
The salt teeres from his eien twey
ful fast ronnen doune by either cheke
So longe he gan of socour hem beseke
That for to heale him of his sorowes sore
Thei gaue him Antenor, withouten more

But who was glad inough but Calcas tho
And of this thing ful sone his nedes leide
On hem that shoulden for the tretise go
And hem for Antenor ful ofte preide
To bringen home king Thoas, and Creseide
And whan Priam his safegarde sent
Thembassadours to Troie streight thei went

The cause I tolde of her comming, the olde
Priam the king, ful sone in generall
Let here vpon his parliment holde
Of whiche the effecte rehercen you I shall
Thembassadours ben answerde for finall
The eschaunge of prisoners, and al this nede
Hem liketh wel, and forth in thei procede

This Troilus was present in the place
Whan asked was for Antenor Creseide
For whiche ful sone chaungen gan his face
As he that with tho wordes wel nigh deide
But natheless he no worde to it seide
Lest men should his affection espie
With mannes hert, he gan his sorowes drie

And ful of anguishe and of grelly drede
Abode, what other lordes would to it sey
And if thei would graunt, as God forbede
The eschaūge of her, thē thought he thigs twey
First, how to saue her honor, and what wey
He might best the eschaunce of her withstonde
ful fast he cast how al this might stonde

Loue him made al prest to done her bide
And rather dien, than she should go
But Reason said him on that other side
Withouten assent of her, do nat so
Lest for thy werke she would be thy foe
And sain, ỹ through thy medling is iblowe
Your bother loue, ther it was erst inowe

For whiche he gan deliberen for the best
And though the lordes would that she went
Ye would let hem graunt what hem lest
And tel his lady first what that thei ment
And when that she had said him her entent
Therafter would he worken also bliue
Tho al the world ayen it would striue

Hector which that wel the Grekes herde
For Antenor, how thei would haue Creseide
Gan it withstonde, and soberly answerde
Sirs, she nis no prisoner (he seide)
I not on you who that this charge leide
But on my parte, ye maie eftsones hem tell
We vsen here, no women for to sell

The noise of people vp stert them atones
As brimme as blase of strawe iset on fire
For infortune it would for the nones
Thei shoulden her confusion desire
Hector (q thei) what gost may you enspire
This woman thus to shilde, and done vs lese
Dan Antenore, a wrong waie now ye chese

That is so wise, and eke so bolde baroun
And we haue nede to folke, as men may se
Ye is one the greatest of this toun
O Hector, lette thy fantasies be
O king Priam (q thei) thus segge we
That all our voice is to forgone Creseide
And to deliuer Antenor thei preide

O Iuuenal lord, trewe is thy sentence
That litel wenen folke what is to yerne
That thei ne finden in her desire offence
For cloude of errour lette hem discerne
What best is, and lo, here ensample as yerne
These folke desiren now deliueraunce
Of Antenor that brought hem to mischaūce

For he was after traitour to the toun
Of Troy alas, thei quitte him out to rathe
O nice world, lo thy discrecion
Creseide, which that neuer did hem scathe
Shal nowe no lenger in her blisse bathe
But Antenor, he shal come home to toune
And she shal out, thus said here and houne

For which delibered was by parlement
For Antenor to yelden out Creseide
And it pronounced by the president
Though that Hector nay ful ofte praide
And finally, what wight that to hem saide
It was for naught, it must ben, and should
For substaunce of the Parlement it would

Departed out of the parliment echone
This Troilus, without wordes mo
Unto his chambre spedde him fast alone
But if it were a man of his or two
The whiche he bad out fast for to go
Bicause he would slepen, as he saide
And hastely vpon his bedde him laide

And as in winter leaues ben birafte
Eche after other til trees be bare
So ỳ there nis but barke and braunche slafte
Lithe Troilus, biraft of eche wel fare
Ibounden in the blacke barke of care
Disposed wode out of his witte to breide
So sore him sate the chaunging of Creseide

He rist him vp, and euery dore he shette
And windowe eke, and tho this sorowful man
Upon his beddes side doune him sette
Ful like a deed image, pale and wan
And in his brest the heaped wo began
Out brust, and he to worken in this wise
In his woodnesse, as I shal you deuise

Right as the wilde Bulle beginneth spring
Now here now there, idarted to the harte
And of his death roreth, in complaining
Right so gan he about the chambre sterte
Smiting his brest, aie with his fistes smerte
His heed to the wall, his body to the grounde
Ful ofte he swapte him seluen to confounde

His eyen two for pite of his herte
Out stremeden as swifte as welles two wey
The highe sobbes of his sorowes smerte
His speche him refte, vnnethes might he sey
O death alas, why nilt thou do me dey?
Icursed by that day whiche that nature
Shope me to ben a liues creature

But after whan the fury and al the rage
Whiche that his hart twist, and fast threst
By length of time somewhat gan aswage
Upon his bedde he laide him doun to rest
But tho begon his teares more out to brest
That wonder is the body maie suffise
To halfe this wo, whiche that I you deuise

Than saide he thus: Fortune alas the while
What haue I done? what haue I the agilt?
How mightest thou for routhe me begile?
Is there no grace? and shal I thus be spilt?
Shal thus Creseide away for that thou wilt
Alas? how mightest thou in thine hart finde
To ben to me thus cruel and vnkinde?

Haue I the nat honoured al my liue?
As thou well wotest, aboue the goddes all
Why wilt thou me fro ioie thus depriue
O Troilus, what may men now the cal
But wretche of wretches, out of honour fal
Into misery, in whiche I wol bewaile
Creseide alas, til that the brethe me faile

Alas Fortune, if that my life in ioie
Displeased had vnto thy foule Enuie
Why ne haddest thou my father king of Troy
Birafte the life, or done my brethren die
Or slaine my selfe, ỳ thus complaine & crie
I combre wold, that maie of nothing serue
But euer die, and neuer fully sterue

If that Creseide alone were me lafte
Naught raught I whider ỳ woldest me sters
And her alas, than hast thou me birafte
But euermore, lo this is thy manere
To reue a wight that moste is to him dere
To preue in that thy gierfull violence
Thus am I lost, there helpeth no defence

O very lorde, O loue, O God alas
That knowest best min hert, and al my thought
What shal my sorowfull life done in this caas
If I forgo that I so dere haue bought
Sens ye Creseide and me haue fully brought
Into your grace, and both our hertes sealed
How maie ye suffer alas it be repealed

What I may done I shal, while I may dure
On liue, in turment and in cruell paine
This infortune, or this disauenture
Alone as I was borne I wol complaine
Ne neuer wol I sene it shine or raine
But ende I wol as Edippe in derkenesse
My sorowful life, and dien in distresse

O wery gost, that errest to and fro
Why nilt thou flien out of the wofullest
Body, that euer might on grounde go
O soule, lurking in this woful neste
Flie forthout mine hart, and let it brest
And folowe alwaie Creseide thy lady dere
Thy right place is now no lenger here

O woful eien two, sens your disporte
Was al to sene Creseides eien bright
What shal ye done, but for my discomforte
Stoden for naught, & wepen out your sight
Sens she is queint, ỳ wont was you to light
I veine from this forth haue I eien twey
Iformed, sens your vertue is awey

O my Creseide, O lady soueraine
Of this wofull soule that thus crieth
Who shal now yeuen comfort to thy paine
Alas no wight, but whan mine hert dieth
Thy spirite, whiche that so vnto you hieth
Receiue in gree, for that shall aie you serue
For thy no force is, though the body sterue

O ye louers, that high vpon the whele
Sen sette of Fortune, in good auenture
God lene that ye finden aie loue of stele
And longe mote your life in ioy endure
But when ye comen by my sepulture
Remembreth that your felowe resteth there
For I loued eke, though I vnworthy were

O olde vnholsome and mistiued man
Calcas I meane, alas what eiled the
To ben a greke: sens thou art borne Troian
O Calcas, whiche that wolt my bane be
In cursed time was thou borne for me
As would blisful Ioue for his ioye
That I the had where I would in Troie

A thousande sighes hotter than the glede
Out of his brest, eche after other wente
Medled with plaint newe, his wo to fede
For whiche his wofull teeres neuer stente
And shortly so his sorowes him to rente
And wore so mate, that ioy or penaunce
He felethe none, but lieth in a traunce

Pandare, whiche that in the parliment
Had herde what euery Lord and burgeis seid
And how ful graunted was by one assent
For Antenor, to yelden out Creseide
Gan well nigh wode out of his wit to breide
So that for wo he nist what he mente
But in a race to Troilus he wente

A certaine knight, that for the time kepte
The chambre doore, vndid it him anone
And Pandare that ful tenderly wepte
In to the derke chambre as stil as stone
Towarde the bedde gan softly to gone
So confuse, that he nist what to say
For very wo, his witte was nigh away

And with chere and lokyng al to torne
For sorow of this, and with his armes folden
Hestode this wofui Troilus beforne
And on his pitous face he gan beholden
But so ofte gan his hart colden
Seyng his frende in wo, whose heuinesse
His hart clough, as thought him for distresse

This wofui wight, this Troilus that felte
His frende Pandare icomen him to se
Gan as the snow ayenst the sunne melte
For whiche this wofui Pandare, of pite
Gan for to wepe, as tenderly as he
And specheles thus ben these ilke twey
That neither might for sorow o worde sey

But at the last, this wofull Troilus
Nigh deed for smert, gan breden out to rore
And with a sorowful noise he said thus
Amonges his sobbes, and his sighes sore
Lo Pandare I am deed, withouten more
Hast thou nat herde at parliment he seide
For Antenor how loste is my Creseide

This Pandare ful deed and pale of hewe
Ful pitously answerde, and saide yes
As wisely were it false as it is trewe
That I haue herde, and wote al how it is
O mercy God, who would haue trowed this
Who would haue wende ỹ in so litell a throw
Fortune our ioye would haue ouerthrow

For in this world there is no creature
As to my dome, that euer sawe ruine
Straunger thẽ this, through case or auẽture
But who may al eschue or al deuine
Suche is this world, for thy I thus deline
Ne trust no wight to finde in Fortune
Aie propertie, her yeftes ben commune

But tel me this, why thou art now so mad
To sorowen thus, why liste thou in this wise
Sens thy delire al holly hast thou had
So that by right, it ought inough suffice
But I that neuer felte in my seruice
A frendly chere or loking of an eye
Let me thus wepe and wailen til I dye

And ouer al this, as thou wel wost thy selue
This toune is ful of ladies al aboute
And to my dome, fairer than suche twelue
As euer she was, shall I finden in some route
Ye one or twey, withouten any doute
For thy be glade mine owne dere brother
If she be lost, we shal recouer an other

What God forbid alway that eche pleasaunce
In o thing were, and in non other wight
If one can singe, another can wel daunce
If this be goodly, she is glad and light
And this is faire, and that can good aright
Eche for his vertue holden is for dere
Bothe heroner and faucon for riuere

And

And eke as writ zansis, that was full wise
The newe loue out chaseth oft the old
And vpon newe case lieth newe auise
Thinke eke thy self to sauen art thou hold
Soche fire by processe, shall of kind cold
For sens it is but casuell pleasaunce
Some case shal put it out of remembraunce.

For also sure as daie cometh after night
The newe loue, labour, or other wo
Or els selde seing of a wight
Doen old affections all ouer go
And for thy part, thou shalt haue one of tho
To abredge with thy bitter paines smarte
Absence of her, shall driue her out of harte.

These wordes saied he for the nones all
To helpe his frende, lest he for sorowe deide
For doubtlesse to doen his wo to fall
He raught nat what vnthrift that he seide
But Troilus that nigh for sorowe deide
Toke little hede, of all that euer he ment
One eare it heard, at the other out it went.

But at the last he answerde, and said frend
This lechcraft, or healed thus to be
Were well sitting, if that I were a fend
To traien a wight, that true is vnto me
I praie God let this counsaile neuer ithee
But doe me rather sterue anon right here
Er I thus doen, as thou me wouldest lere.

Se that I serue iwis, what so thou seie
To whom mine harte enhabite is by right
Shall haue me holly hers till that I deie
For Pandarus, sens I haue trouth her hight
I woll nat been vntrue for no wight
But as her man I woll aie liue and sterue
And neuer non other creature serue.

And there thou saiest thou shalt as faire find
As she, let be, make no comparison
To creature iformed here by kinde
O leue Pandare, in conclusion
I woll nat been of thine opinion
Touching all this, for whiche I thee beseche
So holde thy peace, ẏ slaest me w̄ thy speche.

Thou biddest me I should loue an other
All freshly newe, and let Creseide go
It lithe nat in my power leue brother
And though I might, yet would I nat doe so
But canst thou plaien raket to and fro
Nettle in docke out, now this now ẏ Pādare
Now foule fall her for thy wo that care.

Thou farest eke by me Pandarus
As he, that whan a wight is wo bigon
He cometh to him a pace, & saith right thus
Thinke not on smart, & thou shalt fele none
Thou maiest me first transmewen in a stone
And reue me my passions all
Or thou so lightly doe my wo to fall.

The death maie well out of my brest depart
The life so long maie this sorowe mine
But fro my soule shall Creseides dart
Out neuermore, but doune with Proserpine
Whan I am dedde, I woll won in pine
And there I woll eternally complain
My wo, and how that twinned be we twain

Thou hast here made an argument for fine
How that it should lasse pain be
Creseide to forgon, for she was mine
And liued in ease and in felicite
Why gabbest thou, that saidest vnto me
That him is wors that is fro wele ithrowe
Than he had erst none of that wele knowe.

But tel me now, sens ẏ the thinketh so light
To chaungen so in loue aie to and fro
Why hast thou nat doen busily thy might
To chaungen her, that doeth thee al thy wo?
Why nilt thou let her fro thine harte go?
Why nilt thou loue an other lady swete
That maie thine harte setten in quiete?

If thou hast had in loue aie yet mischaūce
And canst it not out of thine harte driue
I that loued in lust and in pleasaunce
With her, as moche as creature on liue
How should I that foryet, and that so bliue
O where hast thou been hid so long in mewe
Thou canst so well and formeliche argewe.

Naie God wot, naught worth is all thy rede
For whiche, for what that euer maie befall
Withouten wordes mo I woll been dede
O death, that ender art of sorowes all
Come now, sens I so oft after thee call
For sely is that death, foth for to sain
That oft icleped, cometh and endeth pain.

Well wote I, while my life was in quiete
Er thou me slue, I would haue yeuen hire
But now thy comming is to me so swete
That in this worlde, I nothing so desire
O death, sens with this sorowe I am a fire
Thou either doe me anon in teares drenche
Or with thy cold stroke mine harte quenche.

Sens that thou slaest sokele in sondry wise
Ayenst her will, vnpraied daie and night
Doe me at my request this seruice
Deliuer now the worlde, so doest thou right
Of me that am the wofullest wight
That euer was, for time is that I sterue
Sens in this world of right nauht do I serue

This Troilus in teares gan distill
As licour out of Alambike full fast
And Pandarus gan hold his tong still
And to the ground his yen doune he cast
But natheless, thus thought he at last
What parde, rather than my felowe deie
Yet shall I somwhat more vnto him seie.

And said frend, sens thou hast soche distresse
And sens thee list mine argumentes blame
Why nilt thy selven helpe doen redresse
And with thy manhode letten all this game
Go ravisse her, ne canst thou not for shame?
And either let her out of toune fare
Or hold her still, and leaue thy nice face.

Art thou in Troie, and hast non hardiment
To take a wight, whiche that loueth thee
And would her selven been of thine assent
Now is nat this a nice vanite
Rise vp anon, and let this weping be
And sith thou art a man, for in this hour
I woll been dedde, or she shall been our.

To this answerde him Troilus full soft
And saied, iwis my leue brother dere
All this haue I my self yet thought full oft
And more thing than thou deuisest here
But why this thing is laft, ỹ shalt well here
And whan thou hast me yeuen audience
Thereafter maiest thou tell all thy sentence.

First sin ỹ wost this toun hath al this werre
For rauishing of women so by might
It should not been suffred me to erre
As it stont now, ne doen so greate vnright
I should haue also blame of euery wight
My fathers graunt if that I so withstood
Sens she is chaunged for the tounes good.

I haue ek thought, so it were her assent
To aske her of my father of his grace
Than thinke I, this were her accusement
Sens well I wot I maie her nat purchace
For sens my father in so high place
As Parliment, hath her eschaunge enseled
Ne will for me his letter be repealed.

Yet drede I more her harte to perturbe
With violence, if I doe soche a game
For if I would it openly disturbe
It must be disclaundre to her name
And me were leauer die than her diffame
As nolde God, but I should haue
Her honour, leauer than my life to saue.

Thus am I lost, for aught that I can se
For certain is that I am her knight
I must her honour leauer haue than me
In euery case, as louer ought of right
Thus am I with desire and reason twight
Desire for to distourben her me redeth
And reason nill not, so mine harte dredeth.

Thus weping, that he could neuer cease
He saied alas, how shall I wretche fare
For well fele I alwaie my loue encrease
And hope is lasse and lasse Pandare
Encreasen eke the causes of my care
So wela waie, why nill mine harte breft
For as in loue there is but little rest.

Pandare answerde, frend thou maiest for me
Doen as thee list, but had I it so hote
And thine estate, she should go with me
Tho all this toun cried on this thing by note
I nolde set at all that noise a grote
For whan men haue cried than woll thei roun
Eke wonder last but. ix. daies neuer in toun.

Deuine not in reason aie so depe
Ne curtelly, but helpe thy self anon
Bet is that other than thy selven wepe
And namely sens ye two been all one
Rise vp, for by mine hedde she shall not gone
And rather been in blame a little ifound
Than sterue here as a gnat wouten wound.

It is no shame vnto you ne no vice
Her to withholden, that ye loueth moste
Parauenture she might holde thee for nice
To letten her go thus vnto the Grekes hoste
Thinke eke for tune, as well thy selven woste
Helpeth hardie man vnto his emprise
And weiueth wretches, for her cowardise.

And though thy lady would alite her greue
Thou shalt thy self thy peace hereafter make
But as to me certain I can not leue
That she would it as now for euill take
Why should than for feare thine harte quake
Thinke how Paris hath, that is thy brother
A loue, and why shal thou not haue an other

And

And Troilus, o thing I dare thee swere
That if Creseide, whiche that is thy lefe
Now loueth thee, as well as thou doest here
God helpe me so, she nill not take a grefe
Though thou do bote anon in this mischefe
And if she wilneth fro thee for to passe
Than is she falle, so loue her well the lasse.

For thy take hart, & thinke right as a knight
Through loue is broken aldaie euery lawe
Kith now somwhat thy corage & thy might
Haue mercie on thy self for any awe
Let not this wretched wo thine hart gnawe
But manly set the worlde on fire and seuen
And if thou die a martir go to heauen.

I woll my self been with thee at this dede
Though I and all my kin vpon a stound
Should in a strete, as dogges liggen dede
Through girt with many a bloodie wound
In euery case I woll a frend be found
And if thee liketh here sterue as a wretche
A dieu, the deuill spede him that retche.

This Troilus gan with tho wordes quicken
And saied frend, graunt mercie, I assent
But certainly thou maiest nat so me prichen
Ne pain none ne maie me so tourment
That for no case, it is not mine entent
At thort wordes, though I dien should
To rauishen her, but if her self it would.

Why, so meane I (q Pandarus) al this day
But tell me than, hast thou her well assaied
That so wel thus: & he answerde him naie
Whereof art thou (q Pandare) than dismaied
That nosse not that she wol been euil apaied
To rauishen her, sens thou hast not ben there
But if that Ioue tolde it in thine eare.

For thy rise vp as naught ne were anon
And washe thy face, & to the king thou wend
Or he maie wonder whider thou art gon
Thou must with wisedome, him and other blend
Or vpon case he maie after thee send
Or thou beware, and shortly brother dere
Be glad, and let me werke in this matter.

For I shall shape it so, that sikerly
Thou shalt this nizt somtime & some manere
Come speaken with thy Ladie priuely
And by her wordes ehe, as by her chere
Thou shalt full sone aperceiue and well here
Of her entent, and in this case the best
And fare now well, for in this poinct I rest.

The swift fame, whiche that fals thinges
Equall reporteth like the thinges true
Was throughout Troie isled, with prest winges
Fro man to man, and made his tale all newe
How Calcas doughter with her bright hewe
At Parliment without wordes more
I graunted was, in chaunge of Antenore.

The whiche tale anon right as Creseide
Had heard, she whiche y of her father roughte
(As in this case) right nazt, ne whā he deide
Full busily to Iupiter besought
Yeue him mischaunce, y this tretis brought
But shortly lest these tales sothe were
She durst at no wight asken it for fere.

As she that had her hart and all her minde
On Troilus iset so wonder fast
That all this world ne mizt her loue vnbind
Ne Troilus out of her harte cast
She would ben his, while y her life maie last
And she thus brenneth bothe in loue & drede
So that she nist what was best to rede.

But as men seen in toune, and all about
That women vsen her frendes to visite
So to Creseide of women came a rout
For pitous ioie, and wenden her delite
And with her tales dere inough a mite
These women, whiche that in the cite dwell
Thei set hem doune, and saied as I shall tell.

(q first that one) I am glad truely
Bicause of you, that shall your father se
An other saied, i wis so am not I
For all to little hath she with vs be
(q tho the thirde) I hope i wis that she
Shall bringen vs the peace on euery side
That whan she goth, almightie God her gide

Tho wordes and tho womanniche thinges
She herd hem rizt as though she thens were
For God it wote, her harte on other thing is
Although the body sat emong hem there
Her aduertence is alwaie els where
For Troilus full fast her soule sought
Withouten worde, on him alwaie she thouzt

These women that thus wēden her to please
Al bout naught gon all her tales spende
So che vanite ne can doen her none ease
As she that all this meane while brende
Of other passion than thei wende
So that she felt almosse her harte die
For wo, and werie of that companie.

For

For whiche might she no lenger restrain
Her teares, thei gan so vp to well
That gaue signes of her bitter pain
In whiche her spirite was, and must dwell
Remembring her frō heauen vnto which hel
She fallen was, sens she forgo the sight
Of Troilus, and sorowfully she sight.

And thilke fooles, sitting her about
Wende that she wept and sighed sore
Bicause that she should out of the rout
Departen, and neuer plaie with hem more
And thei that had knowen her of yore
Se her sowepe, and thought it was kindnesse
And eche of hem wept eke for her distresse.

And busilie thei gonnen her to comforten
One thig God wot, on which she little thought
And with her tales wenden her disporten
And to be glad thei ofte her besought
But soche an ease therwith thei her wrought
Right as a man is eased for to fele
For ache of hedde, to clawen him on his hele.

But after all this nice vanite
Thei toke her leue, and home thei wenten all
Creseide full of sorowfull pite
Into her chambre vp went out of the hall
And on her bedde she gan for dedde to fall
In purpose neuer thens for to rise
And thus she wrought, as I shall you deuise.

Her owmded heer, that sonnishe was of hewe
She rent, and eke her fingers long and smal
She wrong full oft, and bade god on her rue
And with the death to doe bote on her bale
Her hewe whilom bright, that tho was pale
Bare witnesse of her wo, and her constreint
And thus she spake, sobbing in her compleint

Alas (q she) out of this regioun
I wofull wretche and infortuned wight
And borne in cursed constellacioun
Motegon, and thus departen fro my knight
Wo worthe alas, that ilke daies light
On which I sawe him first with yen twain
That causeth me, and I him all this pain.

Therwith the teares from her yen two
Doune fell, as shoure in Aprill swithe
Her white brest she bet, and for the wo
After the death she cried a thousande sithe
Sens he that wont her wo was for to lith
She mote forgon, for whiche disauenture
She helde her self a forlost creature.

She saied, how shall he doen and I also
How should I liue, if that I from him twin
O dere harte eke that I loue so
Who shall that sorowe slacn, that ye been in?
O Calkas father, thine be all this sin
O mother mine, that cleaped wer Argiue
Wo worth that daie, ꝑ thou me bare on liue.

To what fine should I liue and sorowē thus
How should a fishe withouten water dure?
What is Creseide worthe from Troilus?
How should a plant or liues creature
Liue withouten his kinde norriture
For whiche full oft, a by worde here I seie
That rooteleſſe mote grene sone deie.

I shall doen thus, sens neither sword ne dart
Dare I none handle, for the cruelte
That ilke daie that I fro you depart
If sorowe of that nill nat my bane be
Than shall no meate ne drinke come in me
Till I my soule out of my brest vnsheath
And thus my seluen woll I doen to death.

And Troilus, my clothes euerichone
Shull blacke been, in tokening harte swete
That I am as out of this worlde agone
That wont was you to set in quiete
And of mine order aie, till death me mete
The obseruaunce euer in your absence
Shall sorowe been, complaint, ꝛ abstinence.

Mine harte, ꝛ eke the wofull ghost therein
Biqueth I with your spirite to complain
Eternally, for thei shall neuer twin
For though in yearthy twinned be we twain
yet in the felde of pite, out of pain
That hight Elisos, shall been ifere
As Orpheus and Erudice his fere.

Thus harte mine, for Antenor alas
I sone shall be chaunged, as I wene
But how shull ye doen in this sorowful caas
How shall your tender harte this sustein
But harte mine, for yet this sorowe and tene
And me also, for sothly for to seie
So ye well fare, I retche not to deie.

How might it euer redde been or isong
The plaint that she made in her distresse
I not, but as for me my little tong
If I discriuen would her heuinesse
It should make her sorowe seme lesse
Than that it was, and childishly deface
Her hie complaint, and therfore I it pace.

Pandare, whiche that sent from Troilus
Was vnto Creseide, as ye haue heard deuise
That for the best it was accorded thus
And he full glad to doen him that seruice
Vnto Creseide in a full secrete wise
There as she laie, in tourment and in rage
Came her to tell all holly his message.

And sonde that she her selue gan to trete
Full pitously, for with her salt teares
Her brest and face ibathed was full wete
Her mightie tresses of her sonnishe heares
Unbroiden, hangen all about her eares
Whiche yaue him very signe of mattire
Of death, whiche that her harte gan desire.

Whan she him sawe, she gan for sorowe anon
Her teary face, atwirt her armes hide
For whiche this Pandare is so wo bigon
That in the hous he might vnneth abide
As he that felt sorowe on euery side
For if Creseide had erst complained sore
Tho gan she plain a thousande times more.

And in her aspre plaint, thus she seide
Pandare, first of ioies mo than two
Was cause, cauling vnto me Creseide
That now transmued been in cruell wo
Whether shall I saie to you welcome or no?
That alderfirst me brought vnto seruise
Of loue alas, that endeth in soche wise.

Endeth than loue in wo? Ye or men lieth
And all worldly blisse, as thinketh me
The ende of blisse aie sorowe it occupieth
And who troweth not that it so be
Let him vpon me wofull wretche se
That my self hate, and aie my birthe curse
Feling alwaie, fro wicke I go to worse.

Who so me seeth, he seeth sorowe al atonis
Pain, tourment, plaint, wo, and distresse
Out of my wofull bodie harme there none is
As langour, anguishe, cruell bitternesse
Annoie, smarte, drede, furie, and eke sicknesse
I trowe iwis from heauen teares rain
For pite of my aspre and cruell pain.

And thou my suster, full of discomfort
(q Pandarus) what thinkest thou doe?
Why ne hast thou to thy selue some resort?
Why whilt thou thus thy self alas fordo?
Leaue all this werke, and take now hede to
That I shall sain, and herken of good entent
This message, that by me Troilus you sent.

Tourned her tho Creseide, a wo making
So greate, that it a death was for to se
Alas (q she) what wordes maie ye bring
What woll my dere harte sain to me
Whiche that I drede neuer more to se
Woll he haue plaint or teares er I wende
I haue inough, if he therafter sende.

She was right soche to seen in her visage
As is that wight that men on beare binde
Her face like of Paradis the Image
Was all ichaunged in an other kinde
The plaie, the laughter, men wer wōt to find
On her, and eke her ioies euerichone
Been fledde, and thus lieth Creseide alone.

About her iyen two, a purpre ring
Bitrent, in sothfast tokening of her pain
That to behold it was a dedly thing
For whiche Pandare might nat restrain
The teares from his iyen for to rain
But natheless as the best might he seide
From Troilus these wordes to Creseide;

Lo nece, I trowe ye han heard all how
The king with other Lordes for the best
Hath made eschaunge of Anteno^r and you
That cause is of this sorowe and this vnrest
But how this case doeth Troilus molest
This maie none yearthly mannes tong saie
For very wo, his wit is all awaie.

For whiche we haue so sorowed, he and I
That into little, it had vs bothe slawe
But thorough my counsaile this daie finally
He somwhat is fro weping withdrawe
And semeth me that he desireth fawe
With you to been all night for to deuise
Remedie of this, if there were any wise.

This short and plain, the effect of my message
As ferforthe as my wit can comprehende
For ye that been of tourment in soche rage
Maie to no long prologue as now entende
And hereupon ye maie answere him sende
And for the loue of God my nece dere
So leaue this wo or Troilus be here.

Greate is my wo (q she) and sighed sore
As she that feleth deadly sharpe distresse
But yet to me his sorowe is mokell more
That loue him bet than he himself I gesse
Alas, for me hath he soche heuinesse
Can he for me so pitously complain
I wis this sorowe doubleth all my pain.

Greuous

Greuous to me God wot it is for to twin
(q she) but yet it harder is to me
To seen that sorowe which that he is in
For well wot I, it woll my bane be
And die I woll in certain tho (q she)
But bid him cum, er deth ꝑ thus me threteth
Driue out ꝑ ghost, which in min hart beteth

And shortly all the sothe for to seie
He was so fallen in dispaire that daie
That vtterly he shope him for to deie
For right thus was his argument alwaie
He saied he nas but lorne wela waie
For all that cometh, cometh by necessite
Thus to been lorne it is my destine.

These wordes saied, he on her armes two
Fill grufe, and gan to wepen pitously
(q Pandarus) alas why doe ye so
Sens ye well wote the time is fast by
That he shall come, arise vp hastely
That he you nat biwopen thus ne finde
But ye wol haue him wood out of his minde

For certainly this wote I well he saide
That foresight of diuine purueiaunce
Had seen alwaie me to forgon Creseide
Sens God seeth euery thing out of doutaūce
And hem disposeth through his ordinaunce
In his merites sothly for to be
As thei shull comen by predestine.

For wist he that ye farde in this manere
He would himself slea: and if I wende
To haue this fare, he should not come here
For all the good that Priam maie dispende
For to what fine he would anon pretende
That knowe I well, and for thy yet I seie
So leaue this sorowe, or plainly he woll deie

But natheless alas, whom shall I leue
For there been greate clerkes many one
That destinie, through argumentes preue
And some sain that nedely there is none
But that free choice is yeuen vs euerichone
O wela waie, so sligh arne clerkes old
That I nat whose opinion I maie hold.

And shapeth you his sorowe for to abredge
And nat encrease, lese nece swete
Bethe rather to him cause of plat than edge
And with some wisedom, ye his sorowes bete
What helpeth it to wepen full a strete
Or though ye bothe in salt teares dreint
Bet is a time of cure aie than of pleint.

For some men sain, that God seeth al biforne
Ne God maie nat deceiued been parde
Thā mote it fallen, though mē had it sworne
That purueiaunce hath seen beforne to be
Wherfore I saie, that from eterne if he
Hath will beforn our thought eke as our dede
We haue no free choice, as these clerkes rede,

I meane thus, whan I him hither bring
Sens ye be wise, and bothe of one assent
So shapeth how to distrourbe your going
Or come ayen sone after ye be went
Women been wise, in short auisement
And let seen how your wit shall auaile
And what that I maie help, it shall nat faile

For other thought, nor other deede also
Might neuer been, but soche as purueiaunce
Whiche maie nat been disceiued neuer mo
Hath seled biforne, withouten ignoraunce
For if there might been a variaunce
To writhen out fro Goddes purueiyng
There nere no prescience of thing comming.

Go (q Creseide) and vncle truely
I shall doen all my might me to restrain
From weping in his sight, and busily
Him for to glad, I shall doen all my pain
And in my harte seken euery vain
If to this sore there maie been founden salue
It shall nat lacke certain on mine halfe.

But it were rather an opinion
Uncertain, and no stedfast foreseing
And certes that were an abusion
That God shuld haue no perfite clere weting
More than we men, ꝑ haue doutous wening
But soche an errour vpon God to gesse
Were false and foule, and wicked curstednesse.

Goth Pandarus, and Troilus he sought
Till in a temple he found him all alone
As he that of his life no lenger rought
But to the pitous Goddes euerichone
Full tenderly he praied, and made his mone
To doen him sone out of this worlde to pace
For wel he thought there was non other grace

Eke this is an opinion of some
That haue her top ful high and smoth ishore
Thei sain right thus, ꝑ thing is nat to come
For that the prescience hath seen before
That it shal come, but thei sain that therfore
That it shall come, therfore the purueiaunce
Wote it beforne withouten ignoraunce.

And in this maner this necessite
Retourneth in his parte contrary againe
For nedefully behoueth it nat to be
That thilke thinges fallen in certaine
that bē purueyed, but nedefully as thei saine
Behoueth it that thinges which that fall
That thei in certaine ben puruayed all

I meane as though I laboured me in this
to enquire which thig cause of which thig be
Is whether that the prescience of God is
The certaine cause of the necessite
Of thinges that to comen be parde
Or if necessite of thing coming
Be cause certaine of the purueiyng

But nowe ne enforce I me not in shewing
How ỹ order of the causes stāt, but wel wot I
That it behoueth that the befalling
Of thinges wiste before certainly
Be necessarie, al seme it not therby
That prescience put falling necessayre
To thing to come, al fal it foule or faire

For if there sit a man yonde on a see
That by necessite behoueth it
That certes thine opinion sothe be
That wenest or coniectest that he sit
And further ouer, now ayenwarde yet
Lo, right so is it on the parte contrarie
Is thus, now herken for I wol nat tarie

I say that if the opinion of the
Be sothe for that he sit, than say I this
That he mote sitten by necessite
And thus necessite in either is
For in him nede of sitting is iwis
And in the nede of sothe, and thus forsothe
There mote necessite ben in you bothe

But thou maist saine the mā sit nat therfore
That thine opinion of his sitting soth is
But rather for the man sate there before
Therfore is thine opinion sothe iwis
And I say, though the cause of sothe of this
Cometh of his sitting, yet necessite
Is enterchaunged, bothe in him and in the

Thus in the same wise out of doutaunce
I maie wel maken, as it semeth me
Thy reasoning of goddes purueyaunce
And of the thinges that comen be
By whiche reason men maie wel ise
That thilke thinges that in erthe fall
That by necessite thei comen all

For all though that forthing shall come iwis
Therfore is it purueyed certainly
Nat that it cometh for it pursueyed is
Yet natheless behoueth it nedefully
That thing to come be purueyed trewely
Or els thinges that purueyed be
That thei betiden by necessite

And this sufficeth right inough certaine
For to distroie our free choise euerydell
But nowe is this abusion to saine
That falling of the thinges temporell
Is cause of the goddes prescience eternell
Now trewly that is a false sentence
That thing to come shuld cause his prescīce

What might I wene & I had suche a thought
But that God purueieth thing ỹ is to come
For that it is to come, and els nought
So might I wene that thinges all and some
That whilom ben bifall and outercome
Ben cause of thilke souereine purueyaunce
That forwote al, withouten ignorance

And ouer al this, yet say I more therto
That right as whan I wote there is a thing
I wis that thing mote nedefully be so
Eke right so, whan I wote a thing coming
So mote it come, and thus thei befalling
Of thinges that ben wiste before the tide
Thei mowe not ben eschewed on no side

Than said he thus, almighty Ioue in trone
That wottest of all this thing ỹ sothfastnesse
Rewe on my sorowe, and do me dien sone
Or bring Creseide and me fro this distresse
And while he was in all this heuinesse
Disputing with him selfe in this matere
Came Pandare in, and saide as ye may here

O mighty God (q Pandarus) in trone
Eigh, who saw euer a wise man saren so?
Why Troilus, what thinkest thou to done?
Hast thou such lust to ben thin owne foe?
What parde, yet is nat Creseide ago
Why list thee so thy selfe forgon for drede
That in thine heed, thine eyen semen dede,

Hast thou nat liued many a yere before
Withouten her? and farde ful wel at ease
Art thou for her and for none other borne
Hath kinde the wrought al only her to plese?
Let be and thinke right thus in thy disease
That in ỹ dice, right as therefallen chaunces
Right so in loue there come & gon plesaunces

And yet this is a wonder most of al
Why ỹ thus sorowest seth thou wost nat yet
Touching her goyng, how that it shal fal
Ne if she can her selfe disturben it
Thou hast nat yet allaied al her wit
I man maie al betime his neche bede
Whan it shal of, and sorowen at the nede

For thy take hede of al that I shal say
I haue with her ispoke and longe ibe
So as accorded was betwixe vs twey
And euermore me thinketh thus, that she
Hath somwhat in her hartes priuite
Wher with she can, if I shal aright rede
Disturbe al this, of whiche thou art in drede

For which my counsel is, whan it is night
Thou to her go, and make of this an ende
And blisful Juno, through her great might
Shal as (I hope) her grace vnto vs sende
Mine hart seith certaine she shal nat wende
And for thy put, thine hert a while in rest
And holde thy purpose, for it is the best

This Troilus answerde, and sighed sore
Thou saist right wel, and I wil do right so
And what him list, he said vnto him more
And whan that it was time for to go
Ful priuely him selfe withouten mo
Unto her came, as he was wont to done
And how thei wrought, I shal you tel sone

Soth is, that when thei gonne first to mete
So gan the paine her hertes for to twiste
That neither of hem other might grete
But hem in armes toke, and after kiste
The lasse wofull of hem bothe niste
Wher ỹ he was, ne might o worde out bring
As I laide erst, for wo and for sobbing

The wofull teeres that thei leten fal
As bitter weren out of teeres kinde
For paine, as is ligne, aloes, or gal
So bitter teres wept nat as I finde
The wofull Mirra, through the barke & rinde
That in this world ther nis so herde an hart
That nold haue rewed on her paines smart

But whan her wofull wery gostes twaine
Returned ben, there as hem ought to dwell
And that somwhat to weken gan the paine
By length of plainte, and ebben gan the wel
Of her teeres, and the hart vnswel
Ỹ broken voice, all Horse for shright Creseide
To Troilus these ilke wordes seide

O Joue I die, and mercy the beseche
Helpe Troilus: and therwithal her face
Upon his brest she said, and lost speche
Her wofull spirite from his proper place
Right with the worde, away in point to pace
And thus she lith, with hewes pale and grene
That whilom fresh and fairest was to sene

This Troilus that on her gan beholde
Cleping her name, and she lay as for deed
Withouten answere, & felte her limmes colde
Her eien throwen vpwarde to her heed
This sorouful man, can now non other rede
But oft time her colde mouthe he kisse
Where him was wo, God and himselfe it wisse

He riseth him vp, and long straite he her leide
For signe of life, for aught he can or may
Can he none finde, in nothing of Creseide
For whiche his longe ful oft is welaway
But whan he sawe that specheleste she lay
With sorouful voice, and hart of blisse al bare
He said, how she was fro this world ifare

So after that he long had her complained
His hondes wronge, and said that was to sey
And with his teeres salt her brest berained
He gan tho teeres wipen of full drey
And pitously gan for the soule prey
And said, lorde that set art in thy trone
Reweeke on me, for I shal folow her sone

She colde was, and without sentement
For aught he wote, for brethe felte he none
And this was him a prignant argument
That she was forth out of this worlde agone
And when he saw there was non other wõne
He gan her limmes dresse, in suche manere
As men don hem that shall ben laide on bere

And after this, with sterne and cruel harte
His swerde anon out of his sheth he twight
Him selfe to sleen, howe sore that him smarte
So that his soule, her soule folowen might
There as the dome of Minos would it dight
Sith loue and cruel fortune it ne would
That in this world he lenger liuen should

Than said he thus, fulfilde of high disdaine
O cruel Joue, and thou fortune aduerse
This al and some, that falsely haue ye slaine
Creseide, and sith ye may do me no werse
Fie on your might and werkes so diuerse
Thus cowardely ye shul me neuer winne
There shal no deth me fro my lady twinne

For

For I this world, sith ye haue slain her thus
Wol let, and folowe her spirit lowe or hie
Shal neuer louer saine that Troilus
Dare nat for feare with his lady die
For certaine I wol beare her companie
But sithe ye wol nat suffre vs liuen here
Yet suffreth that our soules ben ifere

And thou Cite, in whiche I liue in wo
And thou Priam, and brethren al ifere
And thou my mother, farwel for I go
And Attropose make redy thou my bere
And thou Creseide, o swete hart dere
Receiue now my spirite, would he ley
With swerde at hart, al redy for to dey

But as God would of swough she abraide
And gan to sighe, and Troilus she cride
And he answerde, lady mine Creseide
Liue ye yet: and let his swerde doun glide
Ye hart mine, that thanked be Cupide
(quod she) and therwithal she sore sight
And he began to glade her as he might

Toke her in armes two and kisse her ofte
And her to glad, he did al his entent
For whiche her gost, that flikered aie alofte
Into her wofull hart aien it went
But at the laste, as that her eye glent
Aside, anon she gan his swerde aspie
As it lay bare, and gan for feare crie

Whan thei wer in her bedde in armes folde
Naught was it like tho nightes here beforne
For petously eche other gan beholde
As thei that hadden al her blisse ilorne
Bewailing aie the daie that thei were borne
Til at the last, this sorowfull wight Creseide
To Troilus these ilke wordes seide

Lo hart mine, wel wote ye this (quod she)
That ilka wight alwaie his wo complaine
And seketh nat how holpen for to be
It nis but folie, and encreace of paine
And sens that here assembled be we twaine
To finde bote of wo that we ben in
It were time al soone to begin

I am a woman, as ful wel ye wotte
And as I am auised sodainly
So wol I tel you, while it is hotte
Me thinketh thus, that neither ye nor I
Ought halfe this wo to maken thilfully
For there is art inough for to redresse
That yet is misse, and sleen this heuinesse

Soth is, the wo the whiche we ben inne
For aught I wote, for nothing els is
But for the cause that we should twinne
Considred al, there nis no more amis
And what is than a remedy vnto this?
But that we shape vs sone for to mete
This al and some, my dere hart swete

Now that I shal wel bringen it aboute
To comen ayen, sone after that I go
Therof am I no maner thing in doute
For dredeleste, within a weke or two
I shal ben here, and that it may be so
By al right, and in wordes fewe
I shal you wel an heape of waies shewe

For whiche I woll nat maken longe sermon
For time ilofte may nat recouered be
But I wol go to my conclusion
And to the beste, in aught that I can se
And for the loue of god forgeue it me
If I spehe aught aienst your hertes reste
For trewly I spehe it for the beste

Making alway a protestacion
That nowe these wordes which I shal say
Nis but to shewe you my mocion
To finde vnto our helpe the beste way
And take it none otherwise I pray
For in effecte, what so ye me commaunde
That wol I done, for that is no demaunde

Now herkeneth this, ye haue well vnderstõd
My goyng graunted is by parliment
So ferforth that it may not ben withstond
For al this world, as by my iugement
And sithe there helpeth none auisement
To letten it, lette it passe out of minde
And let vs shape a better waie to finde

The sothe is, the twinning of vs twaine
Wol vs disease, and cruelly anoie
But him behoueth somtime haue a paine
That serueth loue, if that he wol haue ioie
And sith I shal no farther out of Troie
Than I may ride aien on halfe a morowe
It ought lasse causen vs for to sorowe

So as I shal nat so ben hid in mewe
That day by day, min own herte dere
Seus wel ye wote that it is nowe a trewe
Ye shal ful wel al mine estate here
And er that truce is done, I shal ben here
Than haue ye bothe Antenor i wonne
And me also, bethe glad now if ye conne

And thinke right thus, Creseide is now agon
But what, she shal come hastely ayen
And whan alas? by God, to right anon
Er daies ten, this dare I safely saine
And than at erste, shal we be so faine
So as we shall togithers euer dwell
That al this worlde ne might our blisse tell

I se that oft time, there as we ben nowe
That for the beste, our counsaile for to hide
Ye speke nat with me, nor I with you
In fourtenight, ne se you go ne ride
May ye nat ten daies than abide
For mine honour, in suche auenture
I wis ye mowe or els lite endure?

ye knowe eke howe that all my hin is here
But if that onely it my father be
And eke mine other thinges al ifere
And namely my dere herte ye
Whom that I nolde leauen for to se
For al this worlde, as wide as it hath space
Or els se I neuer Joues face

Why trowe ye my father in this wise
Coueiteth so to se me, but for drede
Lest in this toune that folkes me dispise
Bicause of him, for his vnhappy dede
What wote my father what life that I lede
For if he wist in Troie how wel I fare
Nis neded for my wending nat to care

Ye, that euery day eke more and more
Men treate of peace, and it supposed is
That men the quene Heleine shal restore
And Grekes vs restore that is mis
Though there nere comfort none but this
That men purposen peace on euery side
Ye may the better at ease of harte abide

For if that it be peace, mine hart dere
The nature of the peace mote nedes drive
That men must entrecomune ifere
And to and fro eke ride and gone as bliue
Al day as thicke as Been flien from an hiue
And euery wight haue liberty to bleue
Where as him list, the bet withouten leue

And though so be ỹ peace ther maie ben none
Yet hither, though ther neuer peace ne were
I must come, for whider should I gone
Or how mischaunce should I dwel there
Among tho men of armes euer in fere
For whiche, as wisely God my soule rede
I can nat sene wher of ye should drede

Haue here another way, if it so be
That al this thing ne may you not suffice
My father as ye knowen wel parde
Is olde, and eke ful of couetise
And I right nowe haue founden al the gise
Withouten nette, wherwith I shal him hent
And herkeneth now, if that ye wol assent

Lo Troilus, men saine that full herde it is
The wolfe ful, and the wedder hole to haue
This is to saine, that men full oft iwis
Mote spenden parte, the remnant for to saue
For aie with Golde, men maie the hart graue
Of him that set is vpon couetise
And how I meane, I shal it you deuise

The mouable, whiche ỹ I haue in this toun
Vnto my father shal I take, and saie
That right for trust, and for saluacioun
It sent is, from a frende of his or twaie
The which frendes feruently him praie
To sende after more, and that in hie
While that this toun stant thus in ieopardie

And that shalbe of golde an huge quantite
Thus shal I sain, but lest folke it aspide
This maie be sent by no wight but by me
I shal eke shewen him, if peace betide
What frendes that I haue on euery side
Towarde the courte, to don the wrath pace
Of Priamus, and do him stonde in grace

So

So what for o thing and for other swete
I shal him so enchaunten with my sawes
That right in heuen his soule is, shal he mete
For al Apollo, or his clerkes sawes
Or calculing, auaileth nat thre hawes
Desire of Golde shal so his soule blende
That as me liste, I shall wel make an ende

And if he would aught by his sort it preue
It that I lie, in certaine I shal fonde
Disturben him, and plucke by the sleue
Making his sorte, and bearen him on honde
He hath nat wel the goddes vnderstonde
For goddes speke in amphibologies
And for o sothe, thei tellen twenty lies

Eke drede fonde first goddes, I suppose
Thus shall I saine, & that his cowarde harte
Made him amis the goddes text to glose
When he for ferde out of Delphos sterte
And but I make him sone to conuerte
And done my rede, within a day or twey
I wol to you oblige me to dey

And trewly, as written wel I finde
That al this thing was said of good entent
And that her hart trewe was and kinde
Towardes him, and spake right as she ment
And that she starke for wo nigh whē she went
And was in purpose euer to be trewe
Thus writen thei, that of her werkes knewe

This Troilus, with hart and eeres spradd
Herde al this thing deuised to and fro
And verily it semed that he had
The selue witte, but yet to let her go
His hart misyaue him euermo
But finally he gan his hart wrest
To trusten her, and take it for the best

For whiche the great fury of his penaunce
Was queint w hope, & therwith hē bitwene
Began for ioy the amorous daunce
And as the birdes, when the sunne shene
Deliten in her songe, in leues grene
Right so the wordes, that thei spake ifere
Deliten hem, and made her hartes clere

But natheless, the wending of Creseide
For al this world may nat out of his minde
For whiche ful oft he pitously her preide
That of her heste he might her trewe finde
And saide her, certes if ye be kinde
And but ye come at daie set in Troie
Ne shal I neuer haue heale, honor, ne ioie

For also sothe as sunne bryst to morow
And God so wisely thou me wofull wretche
To rest bring, out of this cruel sorow
I wol my selue slee, if that ye dretche
But of my death though litel be to retche
Yet er that ye me causen so to smarte
Dwel rather here my owne swete harte

For trewly mine owne lady dere
The sleightes yet, that I haue herd you stere
Ful shapely ben to fallen al ifere
For thus men saith, ỹ one thinketh the bere
But al another thinketh the ledere
Your sire is wise, and said is out of drede
Men may the wise out renne, & nat out rede

It is full harde to halten vnespied
Before a crepil, for he can the crafte
Your father is in sleight as Argus eied
For al be it that his mouable is him biraft
His olde sleight is yet so with him laft
Ye shal nat blende him for your womanhede
Ne faine aright, and that is al my drede

I not if peace shal euermo betide
But peace or no, for ernest ne for game
I wote sith Calcas on the Grekes side
Hath ones ben, and lost so foule his name
He dare no more come here ayen for shame
For whiche that we, for ought I can espy
To trusten on, nis but a fantasie

Ye shal eke seen your father shall you glose
To ben a wife, and as he can wel preche
Ye shal some grebe so preise and wel alose
That rauishen he shal you with his speche
Or do you done by force, as he shal teche
And Troilus on whom ye nil haue routh
Shal causeles so sterue in his trouth

And ouer al this your father shal dispise
Us al, and saine this cite is but lorne
And that thassege neuer shal arise
For why the Grekes haue it al sworne
Til we ben slaine, and doun our walles torne
And thus he shal you with his wordes fere
That aie drede I, that ye wol bleuen there

Ye shall eke sene so many a lusty knight
Among the Grekes ful of worthinesse
And eche of hem, with harte, wit, and might
To plesen you, done al his businesse
That ye shull dullen of the rudenesse
Of sely Troians, but if routhe
Remorde you, or vertue of your trouthe

And this to me so greuouse is to thinke
That fro my brest it wol my soule rende
Ne dredelesse, in me there may nat sinke
O good opinion, if that ye wende
For why, your fathers sleight wol vs shende
And if ye gone, as I haue tolde you yore
So thinke I nam but deed, withouten more

For which with humble, true & pitous hart
A thousande times mercie I you praie
So reweth on mine aspre paines smart
And doth somwhat, as that I shal you saie
And let vs steale away betwixt vs twaie
And thinke ỳ soly is, whan a man maie chese
For accident, his substaunce for to lese

I meane thus; that sens we mowe or daie
well steale awaie, and ben togither so
what wit were it to putten in assaie
(In case ye shoulden to your father go)
If that ye mighten come ayen or no
Thus meane I, that were a great folie
To put that siker nesse in ieopardie

And vulgarly to speken of substaunce
Of treasour may we bothe with vs lede
ynough to liue in honour and pleasaunce
Til vnto time that we shall ben dede
And thus we may eschewen al this drede
For euery other waie ye can recorde
Mine hart iwis maie therwith nat acorde

And hardely ne dredeth no pouerte
For I haue kin and frendes els where
That though we comen in our bare sherte
Vs should neuer lacke Golde ne geere
But ben honoured while we dwelten there
And go we anone, for as in mine entent
This is the best, if that ye wol assent

Creseide with a sighe, right in this wise
Answerde, iwis my dere hart trewe
We maie well steale away, as ye deuise
And finden suche vnthrifty waies newe
But afterwarde ful sore it wol vs rewe
And helpe me God so at my most nede
As causeless ye suffren al this drede

For thilke day that I for cherishing
Or drede of father, or for any other wight
Or for estate, delite, or for weding
Be false to you, my Troilus my knight
Saturnus douzter Juno, through her mizt
As woode as Ichamante do me dwell
Eternally with Stix in the pit of Hell

And this, on euery God celestiall
I swere it you, and eke on eche goddesse
On euery nimphe, and deite infernall
On Satiry and fauny more and lesse
That halue goddes ben of wildernesse
And Attropos my threde of life to brest
If I be false, now trowe me if you lest

And thou Sinois, that as an arowe clere
Thrugh Troy rẽnest, aie doun ward to the see
Be witnesse of this worde, that said is here
That thilke day that I untrew be
To Troilus, mine owne hart fre
That thou returne backewarde to thy well
And I with body and soule sinke to hell

But that ye speke awaie thus for to go
And letten al your frendes, God forbede
For any woman that ye shoulden so
And namely sens Troy hath now such nede
Of helpe, and eke of o thing taketh hede
If this were wiste, my life laie in balaunce
And your honor, God shilde vs fro mischaũce

And if so be that peace hereafter be take
As al daie happeth after angre game
Why lorde the sorow & wo ye wolden make
That ye ne durst come ayen for shame
And er that ye ieoparden so your name
Beth nat to hasty in this hotte fare
For hasty man ne wanteth neuer care

what trowe ye the people ehe al aboute
Would of it say? it is ful light to arede
Thei wolden say, and swere it out of doute
That loue ne drawe you nat to don this dede
But luste voluptuous, and cowarde drede
Thus were al lost iwis mine hart dere
your honour, whiche that now shineth clere

And also thinketh on mine honeste
That floureth yet, how soule I should it shẽde
And with what filth it spotted should be
If in this forme I should with you wende
Ne though I liued vnto the worldes ende
My name should I neuer ayenwarde winne
Thus were I lost, and ỳ were routhe sinne

And for thy, flee with reason al this hete
Wen saine the suffraunt ouercometh parde
Eke who so wol haue leke, he leke mote lete
Thus maketh vertue of necessite
By pacience, and thinke that lorde is he
Of fortune aie, that naught woll of her retch
And she ne daunteth no wight but a wretch

And

And trusteth this, that certes harte swete
Or Phebus suster, Lucina the shene
The Lion passe, out of this Arite
I woll been here, withouten any wene
I meane, as helpe me Juno heauens Quene
The tenth daie, but if that death me assaile
I woll you seen, withouten any faile.

And now so this be sothe (q̄ Troilus)
I shall well suffre vnto the tenthy daie
Sens that I se that nede it mote been thus
But for the loue of God, if it be maie
So let vs stealen priuely awaie
For euer in one, as for to liue in rest
Mine harte saieth that it woll be the best.

O mercie God, what life is this (q̄ she)
Alas, ye slea me thus for very tene
I se well now that ye mistrusten me
For by your wordes it is well iseen
Now for the loue of Scithia the shene
Mistrust me nat thus causeles for routh
Sens to be true, I haue you plizt my trouth.

And thinketh well, that somtime it is wit
To spende a time, a time for to win
Ne parde lorne am I nat fro you yet
Though that we been a daie or two a twin
Driue out tho fantasies you within
And trusteth me, and leaueth ehe your sorow
Or here my trouth, I wol nat liue til morow

For if ye wist how sore it dooth me smarte
ye would cesse of this, for God thou wost
The pure spirite wepeth in mine harte
To seen you wepen, whiche that I loue most
And that I mote gone vnto the Grekes hoste
Ye, nere it that I wist a remedie
To come ayen, right here I would die.

But certes I am not so nice a wight
That I ne can imaginen a waie
To come ayen that daie that I haue hight
For who maie holdē a thing that wol a waie
My father naught, for all his queint plaie
And by my thrift, my wending out of Troie
In other daie shall tourne vs all to ioie.

For thy with all mine harte I you beseke
If that you list doen aught for my praiere
And for the loue whiche that I loue you eke
That er that I depart fro you here
That of so good a comfort and a chere
I maie you seen, that ye maie bring at rest
Mine harte, whiche is at poinct to brest.

And ouer all this I praie you (q̄ she) tho
Mine owne hartes lothfast suffisaunce
Sith I am thine all hole withouten mo
That while that I am absent, no pleasaunce
Of other, doe me fro your remembraunce
For I am euer agast, for why men rede
That loue is thing aie full of busie drede.

For in this worlde there liueth ladie none
If that ye were vntrue, as God defende
That so betraied were, or wo begon
As I, that all trouthe in you entende
And doubtlesse, if that ichc other wende
I nere but dedde, and er ye cause finde
For Goddes loue, so beth me naught vnkinde.

To this answered Troilus, and seide
Now God, to whom there nis no cause iwrie
Me glad, as wis I neuer vnto Creseide
Sithe thilke daie I sawe her first with ye
Was false, ne neuer shall till that I die
At short wordes, well ye maie me leue
I can no more, it shall be founde at preue

Graunt mercy good hart mine iwis (q̄ she)
And blisfull Venus let me neuer sterue
Er I maie stonde of pleasaunce in degre
To quite him well, that so well can deserue
And while that God my wit will me cōserue
I shall so doen, so true I haue you found
That aie honour to me ward shall rebounde.

For trusteth well, that your estate roiall
Ne veine delite, nor onely worthinesse
Of you in werre or turnaie marciall
Ne pompe, arraie, nobley, or ehe richesse
Ne made me to rue on your distresse
But morall vertue, grounded vpon trouth
That was the cause I first had on you routh.

Ehe gentle hart, and manhede that ye had
And that ye had (as me thought) in dispite
Euery thing that sowned in to bad
As rudenesse, and peoplishe appetite
And that your reason bridled your delite
This made abouen euery creature
That I was yours, & shall whyle I maie dure.

And this my lengthy of yeres nat fordoe
Ne remuable fortune deface
But Jupiter, that of his might maie doe
The sorowfull to be glad, so yeue vs grace
Er nightes tenne, to meten in this place
So that it maie your harte and mine sufflse
And fareth now well, for time is that ye rise

And after that thei long iplained had
And oft ibist, and straite in armes folde
The daie gan rise, and Troilus him clad
And rufully his Ladie gan behold
As he that felt deathes cares cold
And to her grace he gan him recommaunde
Where he was wo, this hold I no demaunde

For mannes hedde imaginen ne can
Ne entendement consider, ne tongue tell
The cruell paines of this sorowfull man
That passen euery tourment doune in hell
For whan he sawe that he ne might dwell
Whiche that his soule out of his harte rent
Withouten more, out of the chamber he wēt.

Explicit liber quartus.

Incipit liber quintus.

Prochen gan the fatall destine
That Joues hath in disposicion
And to you angrie Parcas sustren thre
Committeth to doen execucioun
For whiche Creseide must out of the toun
And Troilus shall dwell forth in pine
Till Lachesis his threde no lenger twine.

The golden tressed Phebus high on loft
Thrise had all with his beames clere
The Snowes molte, and zephirus as oft
Ibrought ayen the tender leaues grene
Sens that the sonne of Eccuba the Quene
Began to loue her first, for whom his sorowe
Was all, that she depart should a morowe.

Full redy was at prime Diomede
Creseide vnto the Grekes hoste to lede
For sorowe of whiche, she felt her harte blede
As she that nist what was best to rede
And truely, as men in bokes rede
Men wist neuer woman haue the care
Ne was so lothe out of a toune to fare.

This Troilus withouten rede or lore
As man that hath his ioies eke forlore
Was waiting on his ladie euer more
As she that was lothfast croppe and more
Of all his lust or ioies here tofore
But Troilus now farwell all thy ioie
For shalt thou neuer seen her eft in Troie.

Soth is, that while he bode in this manere
He gan his wo full manly for to hide
That well vneth it seen was in his chere
But at the yate there she should out ride
With certain folke he houed her to abide
So wo bigon, all would he not him plain
That on his hors vneth he sate for pain.

For ire he quoke, so gan his harte gnawe
Whan Diomede on hors gan him dight
And saied vnto himself this ilke sawe
Alas (q he) thus foule a wretchednesse
Why suffre I it? why nill I it redresse?
Were it nat bet at ones for to die
Than euermore in langour thus to crie?

Why nill I make at ones riche and poore
To haue inough to doen er that she go?
Why nill I bring all Troie vpon a roore?
Why nill I slaen this Diomede also?
Why nill I rather with a man or two
Steale her awaie? why woll I this endure?
Why nill I helpen to mine owne cure?

But why he nolde doen so fell a deede
That shall I sain, and why him list it spare
He had in harte alwaie a maner drede
Lest that Creseide, in rumour of this fare
Should haue ben slain, lo this was al his care
And els certain, as I saied yore
He had it doen, withouten wordes more.

Creseide whan she redy was to ride
Full sorowfully she sighed, and saied alas
But forthe she mote, for aught ỹ maie betide
And forthe she rideth full sorowfully a pas
There is none other remedy in this cas
What wonder is, though that her sore smart
Whan she forgoeth her owne swete harte.

This Troilus in gise of curtesie
With hauke on hond, and with an huge rout
Of knightes, rode and did her companie
Passing all the baley, ferre without
And ferther would haue ridden out of doubt
Full faine, and wo was him to gon so sone
But tourne he must, and it was eke to doen.

And right with that was Antenor icome
Out of the Grekes hoste, and euery wight
Was of him glad, and saied he was welcome
And Troilus, all nere his harte light
He pained him, with all his full might
Him to with holde of weping at least
And Antenor he kist, and made feast.

And

And ther withall he must his leaue take
And call his ye vpon her pitously
And nere he rode, his cause for to make
To take her by the honde all soberlie
And Loude so she gan wepen tenderlie
And he full soft and slighly gan her seie
Now holde your daie, and doe me not to deie.

With that his courser tourned he about
With face pale, and vnto Diomede
No worde he spake, ne none of all his rout
Of whiche the sonne of Tideus toke hede
As he that kouthe more than the crede
In soche a craft, and by the rain her vent
And Troilus to Troie, hom wardes went.

This Diomede, that lad her by the bridell
Whan that he sawe the folke of Troie awaie
Thought, all my labor shall not been on idell
If that I maie, for somwhat shall I saie
For at the worst, it short maie our maie
I haue heard saie eke, times twise twelue
He is a foole that woll foryete him selue.

But natheless, this thought he well inough
That certainly I am about naught
If that I speake of loue, or make it to tought
For doubtlesse, if she haue in her thought
Him that I gesse, he maie not been ibrought
So sone awaie, but I shall finde a meane
That he nat yet wete shall what I meane.

This Diomede, as he that could his good
Whā this was doen, gā talken forth in speche
Of this and that, and aske why she stood
In soche disease, and gan her eke beseche
That if that he encreasen might or eche
With any thing her ease, that she should
Commaunde it him, & said he doen it would.

For truely he swore her as a knight
That ther nas thig, w which he might her plese
That he nolde doen his pain, and al his might
To doen it, for to doen her harte an ease
And praied her she would her sorowe apease
And saied, iwis we Grekes can haue ioie
To honouren you, as well as folke of Troie.

He said eke thus, I wot you thinketh straūge
No wonder is, for it is to you newe
That acqueintaunce of these Troiās to chaūge
For folke of Grece, that ye neuer knewe
But would neuer God, but if as true
I Greke ye should emong vs all finde
As any Trojan is, and eke as kinde.

And bicause I swore you right now
To been your frende, and helply to my might
And for that more acqueintaunce eke of you
Haue I had, than an other straunger wight
So for this forth, I praie you daie and night
Commaundeth me, how sore that me smarte
To doen, all that maie like vnto your harte.

And that ye me wold, as your brother treate
And taketh not my frendship in despite
And thouz your sorowes been for thinges grete
Not I nat why, but out of more respite
Mine hart hath for to amende it great delite
And if I maie your harmes nat redresse
I am right sorie for your heauinesse.

For though ye Troiās, vs Grekes wroth
Haue many a daie been: alwaie yet parde
O God of loue, in sothe we seruen bothe
And for the loue of God my Ladie free
Whom so ye hate, as bet not wroth with me
For truely there can no wight you serue
That halfe so loth your wrath would deserue

And nere it that we been so nere the tent
Of Calcas, whiche that seen vs bothe maie
I would of this you tell all mine entent
But this ensealed till an other daie
Yeue me your honde, I am and shall be aie
God help me so, whyle that my life maie dure
Your owne, abouen euery creature.

Thus said I neuer er now to woman bourne
For God mine harte as wisely glad so
I loued neuer woman here before me
As paramours, ne neuer shall no mo
And for the loue of God be not my fo
All can I not to you my Ladie dere
Complain a right, for I am yet to lere.

And wōdreth nought mine own lady bright
Though ỳ I speake of loue to you this liue
For I haue heard or this of many a wight
Hath loued thing he neuer sawe his liue
Eke I am not of power for to striue
Ayenst the God of Loue, but him obaie
I woll alwaie, and mercie I you praie.

There beth so worthy knightes in this place
And ye so faire, that eueriche of hem all
Woll pain him to stonden in your grace
But might me so faire a grace fall
That ye me for your seruaunt would call
So lowly, ne so truely you serue
Nill none of hem, as I shall till I sterue.

Creseide

Creseide vnto that purpose lite answerde
As she that was with sorowe oppressed so
That in effect she naught his tales herde
But here and there, now here a worde or two
Her thought her sorowfull harte brast a two
For whan she gan her father ferre espie
Well nigh doune of her hors she gan to sie.

But natheless she thonketh Diomede
Of all his trauaile and his good chere
And that him list his frendship to her bede
And she acceptith it in good manere
And woll doe fain that is him lefe and dere
And trusten him she would, & well she might
As saied she, and from her hors she alight.

Her father hath her in his armes nome
And twētie times he kist his doughter swete
And saied: o dere doughter mine welcome
She said eke, she was fain with him to mete
And stode forth muet, milde, and mansuete
But here I leaue her with her father dwell
And forthe I woll of Troilus you tell.

To Troie is come this wofull Troilus
In sorowe abouen all sorowes smert
With felon loke, and face dispitous
Tho sodainly doune from his hors he stert
And throughout his paleis with swolne hert
To chamber he went, of nothing toke he hede
Ne none to him dare speke a worde for drede.

And there his sorowes that he spared had
He paue an issue large, and death he cride
And in his throwes, frenetike and mad
He curseth Juno, Apollo, and eke Cupide
He curseth Bachus, Ceres, and Cipride
His birthe, himself, his fate, and eke nature
And saue his Ladie, euery creature.

To bed he goth, and weileth there & turneth
In furie, as doeth he Ixion in hell
And in this wise he nigh till daie soiourneth
But tho began his harte alite vnswell
Through teares, which that gonnē vp to wel
And pitiously he cried vpon Creseide
And to him self right thus he spake and seide

Where is mine owne ladie lefe and dere?
Where is her white brest, where is it where?
Where been her armes, and her iyen clere
That yesterdaie this time with me were
Now maie I wepe alone many a teare
And graspe about I maie, but in this place
Saue a pilowe, I finde naught to embrace.

How shall I doen whā shall she come again?
I not alas, why let I her go?
As would God I had as tho be slain
O harte mine Creseide, O swete so
O Ladie mine, that I loue and no mo.
To whom for euer more mine harte I dowe
So how I die, ye nill me not resowe.

Who seeth you now, my right lode sterre?
Who sitteth right now in your presence?
Who can comforten now your hartes werre?
Now I am gon, whom yeue ye audience?
Who speaketh for me rizt now in your absēce
Alas no wight, and that is all my care
For well wote I, as euill as I ye fare.

How should I thus ten daies full endure
Whan I the first night haue all this tene
How shall she eke sorowfull creature
For tendernesse, how shall she this sustene
Sothe wo for me, o pitous, pale, and grene
Shall been your freshe womanly face
For langour er ye tourne vnto this place.

And whan he fill in any slombringes
Anon begin he should for to grone
And dreamen of the dreadfullest thinges
That might been, as mete he were alone
In place horrible, making aie his mone
Or meten that he was emonges all
His enemies, and in her hondes fall.

And therewithall his bodie should starte
And with the starte all sodainly awake
And sothe a tremour sele about his harte
That of the feare his bodie should quake
And therwithall he should a noise make
And seme as though he should fall depe
From high aloft, and than he would wepe.

And rewen on himself so pitously
That wonder was to here his fantasie
In other time he should mightely
Comfort himself, and sain it was folie
So causelesse, sothe dreede for to drie
And eft begin his aspre sorowes newe
That euery man might on his paines rewe.

Who could tell all, or fully discriue
His wo, his plaint, his langour, and his pine
Nat all the men that han or been on liue
Thou reader maiest thy self full well deuine
That sothe a wo my wit can not define
On idell for to write it should I swinke
Whan that my wit is werie it to thinke.

On

On heauen yet the sterres weren seen
Although full pale iwoxen was the Mone
And whiten gan the oxisont shene
All Eastward, as it is wont to doen
And Phebus with his rosie carte sone
Gan after that to dxesse him vp to fare
Whan Troilus hath sent after Pandare.

This Pandare, that of all the daie befoxne
Ne might him comen this Troilus to se
Although he on his hedde it had swoxne
Fox with the king Pxiam aldaie was he
So that it laie nat in his liberte
No where to gon, but on the moxowe he wẽt
To Troilus, whan that he fox him sent.

Fox in his harte he could well deuine
That Troilus all night fox soxowe woke
And that he would tell him of his pine
This knewe he well inough without boke
Fox which to chãber streight the way he toke
And Troilus tho soberly he grette
And on the bedde full sone he gan him sette.

My Pandarus (q Troilus) the soxowe
Whiche that I dxie, I maie not long endure
I trowe I shall not liuen till to moxowe
Fox whiche I would alwaies on auenture
To the deuisen of my sepoulture
The soxme, and of my mouable thou dispons
Right as thee semeth best is fox to doen.

But of the fire and flambe funerall
In whiche my body bxennen shall to glede
And of the feast and plaies palestrall
At my bigile, I pxaie thee take good hede
That that be well, and offer Mars my stede
My swoxde, mine helme, & leue bxother dere
My shelde to Pallas yeue, that shineth clere.

The poudxe, in which min hart ibxẽd shal turn
That pxaie I thee thou take, and it conserue
In a vessell that men clepeth an vxne
Of golde, and to my lady that I serue
Fox loue of whom thus pitously I sterue
So yeue it her, and doe me this pleasaunce
To pxaien her to kepe it fox a remembxaunce

Fox well I sele by my maladie
And by my dxeames, now and yoxe ago
All certainly, that I mote nedes die
The oule ebe, whiche that hight Ascaphilo
Hath after me shxight all these nightes two
And God Mercurie, now of me woful wxetch
The soule guide, and whan thee list it fetche.

Pandare answerde, and saied Troilus
My dere frende, as I haue tolde thee yoxe
That it is folie fox to soxowen thus
And causeless, fox whiche I can no moxe
But who so will not trowen rede ne loxe
I can not seen in him no remedie
But let him woxchen with his fantasie.

But Troilus I pxaie thee tell me now
If that thou trowe er this that any wight
Hath loued paramours as well as thou
Ye God wot, and fro many a woxthie knight
Hath his Ladie gon a fourtenight
And he nat yet made haluendele the fare
What nede is thee to maken all this care?

Sens daie by daie thou maiest thy selfen se
That from his loue, ox els from his wife
A man mote twinnen of necessite
Ye, though he loue her as his owe life
Yet will he with himself thus maken strife
Fox well thou wost my leue bxother dere
That alwaie frendes maie not been ifere.

How doen this folke, ỹ seen her loues wedded
By frendes might as it betideth full oft
And seen hem in her spouses bedde ibedded
God wote thei take it wisely faire and soft
Fox why, good hope halt vp her harte a loft
And fox thei can a time of soxowe endure
As time hem hurteth, a time doeth hem cure

So shouldest thou endure, and letten slide
The time, and londe to been glad and light
Tenne daies nis not so long to abide
And sens she to comen thee hath behight
Sye will her hest breaken fox no wight
Fox dxede thee nat, that she nill finde waie
To come ayen, my life that durst I laie.

Thy sweuenes ebe, and all soche fantasie
Dxiue out, and let hem faren to mischaunce
Fox thei procede of thy melancolie
That doeth thee fele in slepe all this penaũce
I stxawe fox all sweuenesse signifiaunce
God helpe me so, I coumpt hem not a Beane
There wot no mã arizt what dxemes meane

Fox pxiestes of the temple tellen this
That dxeames been the reuelacions
Of Goddes, and als well thei tell iwis
That thei been infernalles illusions
And Leches saine, that of complections
Proceden thei of fast, ox glotonie
Who wot in sothe thus what thei signifie.

Eke other sain, that through impressions
As if a wight hath fast a thing in minde
That thereof cometh swiche auisions
And other sain, as thei in bokes finde
That after times of the yere by kinde
Men dreme, & that theffect goth by the mone
But leaue no dreame, for it is nat to doen.

Well worth of dreames aie these old wiues
And truly eke, augurie of these foules
For feare of which, men wenen lese her liues
As rauēs qualm, or schriching of these oules
To trowen on it, bothe false and foule is
Alas alas, that so noble a creature
As is a man, should drede swiche ordure.

For whiche with all mine hart I thee beseech
Unto thy self, that all this thou forgeue
And rise now vp, withouten more speche
And let vs cast how forth maie best be driuen
The time, and eke how freshly we maie liuē
Whan she cometh, ỹ which shall be right sone
God helpe me so, the best is thus to doen.

Rise, let vs speake of lustie life in Troie
That we haue lad, and forth the time driue
And eke of time coming vs reioie
And bringen shall our blisse now so bliue
And langour of these twise daies fiue
We shall therwith so forget or oppresse
That well binneth it doen shall vs duresse.

This toune is full of lordes all about
And truce taken all this meane while
Go we plaien vs in some lustie rout
To Sarpedon, not hens but a mile
And thus thou shalt the time well begile
And driue it forth, vnto that blisfull morowe
That thou her se, that cause is of thy sorowe

Now rise my dere brother Troilus
For certes it non honour is to thee
To wepe, and in thy bedde to rouken thus
For truely of o thing trust to me
If thou thus ligge, a daie, two or three
The folke wol wene, that thou for cowardise
Thee fainest sick, and that thou darst not rise

This Troilus answerde: o brother dere
This folke knowe that haue isuffred pain
That thouz he wepe, & make sorowfull chere
That feleth harme and smart in euery vain
No wonder is, and though I euer plain
Or alwaie wepe, I am nothing to blame
Sens that I haue lost, ỹ cause of al my game

But sens of fine force I mote arise
I shall arise, as sone as euer I maie
And God, to whom mine harte I sacrifice
So sende vs hastely the tenth daie
For was there neuer soule so faine of Maie
As I shall ben, whā that she cometh in Troie
That cause is of my tourment and my ioie

But whider is thy rede (q Troilus)
That we maie plaie vs best in all this toun
By God my counsaile is (q Pandarus)
To ride and plaie vs with king Sarpedoun
So long of this thei speaken vp and doun
Till Troilus gan at the last assent
To rise, and forth to Sarpedon thei went.

This Sarpedon, as he that honourable
Was euer his liue, and full of hie prowesse
With all that might iserued been on table
That deintie was, all coste it greate richesse
He fedde hem daie by daie, that swiche noblesse
As saiden bothe the moste and eke the least
Was neuer er that daie wiste at any feast.

Nor in this worlde there is none instrument
Delicious, through winde or touche on corde
As ferre as any wight hath euery went
That tong tell, or harte maie recorde
But at that feast, it nas well heard recorde
Ne of Ladies eke so faire a companie
On daunce er tho, was neuer iseen with ye.

But what auaileth this to Troilus
That for his sorowe, nothing of it rought
But euer in one, as harte pitous
Full busily Creseide his Ladie sought
On her was euer all that his harte thought
Now this now that, so fast imagining
That glad iwis can him no feasting.

These Ladies eke, that at this feast been
Sens that he sawe his Ladie was awaie
It was his sorowe vpon hem for to seen
Or for to heare on instrumentes plaie
For she that of his harte hath the kaie
Was absent, lo this was his fantasie
That no wight should maken melodie.

Nor there nas hour in all the daie or night
Whan he was there as no man mizt him here
That he ne saied, o louesome Ladie bright
How haue ye faren sins that ye were there
Welcome iwis mine owne ladie dere
But wela waie, all this nas but a mase
Fortune his houe, entended bet to glase.

The

The letters eke, that she of olde time
Had him isent, he would alone rede
In hundred sithe, atwixt noone and prime
Refiguring her shappe, and her womanhede
within his hart, and euery worde and dede
That passed was, & thus he droue to an ende
The fourth day, and said he wol wende

And said leue brother Pandarus
Intendest thou that we shal here bleue
Til Sarpedon wol forth conueyen vs
yet were it fairer that we toke our leue
For goddes loue, let vs now sone at eue
Our leaue take, and homwarde let vs turne
For trewly I nil nat thus sotourne

Pandare answerde, be we comen hither
To fetchen fire, and rennen home againe
God helpe me so, I can nat tellen whither
We might gone, if I shal sothly saine
There any wight is of vs more saine
Than Sarpedon, and if we hence hie
Thus sodainly, I holde it vilanie

Whan that we saiden we would bleue
With him a weke, and now thus sodainly
The fourth day to take of him our leue
He would wondren on it trewly
Let vs holden forth our purpose fermely
And sens that ye behighten him to abide
Holde forwarde now, and after let vs ride

This Pandarus, with al pine and wo
Made him to dwel, and at the wekes ende
Of Sarpedon thei token her leaue tho
And on her way the speden hem to wende
(y Troilus) now lorde me grace sende
That I maie finde at mine home comming
Creseide comen, and therwith gan he sing

ye haselwode thought this Pandare
And to him seide ful softly he seide
God wotte refroiden may this hotte fare
Er Calcas sende Troilus Creseide
But nathelesse he iaped thus and seide
And swore i wis, his hart him wel behight
She would come, as sone as euer she might

Whan thei vnto the paleis were icomen
Of Troilus, thei doun of horse alight
And to ỹ chambre her waie haue thei nõmen
And vnto time that it gan to night
Thei spoken of Creseide the lady bright
And after this, when hem bothe lesse
Thei spede hem fro the supper vnto rest

On morow as sone as day began to clere
This Troilus gan of his slepe to abreide
And to Pandarus, his owne brother dere
For loue of God, ful pitously he seide
As go we sene the paleis of Creseide
For sens we yet maie haue no more seest
So let vs seine her paleis at the leest

And therwithall his meine for to blende
A cause he fonde in toun for to go
And to Creseides house thei gon wene
But lorde this sely Troilus was wo
Him thought his sorouful hart brast a two
For when he saw her doores sperred all
Wel nigh for sorow adoun he gan to fall

Therwith when he was ware, & gan behold
How shet was euery window of the place
As frost him thought his hart gan to cold
For whiche with chaunged deedly pale face
Withouten worde, he forth by gan to pace
And as God would, he gan so fast ride
That no wight of his countenaunce aspide

Than saide he thus: O paleis desolate
O house of houses, whilom best ihight
O paleis empty and disconsolate
O thou lanterne, of which queint is the light
O paleis, whilom day that now art night
Wel oughtest thou to fal, and I to die
Sens she is went, that wont was vs to gie

O paleis whilom croune of houses al
Enlumined with sunne of al blisse
O ring, of whiche the rubie is out fall
O cause of wo, that cause hast ben of blisse
yet sens I may no bet, faine would I kisse
Thy colde doores, durst I for this route
And farwel shrine, of whiche the saint is oute

Therwith he cast on Pandarus his eie
With chaunged face, and pitous to beholde
And whan he might his time aright aspie
Ne as he rode, to Pandarus he tolde
His newe sorow, and eke his ioyes olde
So petously, and with so deed an hewe
That euery wight, might on his sorow rewe

Fro thence forth he rideth vp and doune
And euery thing came him to remembraunce
As he rode forthe by the places of the toune
In whiche he whilom had al his pleasaunce
Lo, ponder saw I mine owne lady daunce
And in that temple with her eyen clere
We caught first my right lady dere

And yonder haue I herde ful lustely
My dere hart laugh, and yonder plaie
Sawe I her ones eke ful blisfully
And yonder ones to me gan she saie
Now good swete, loue me wel I praie
And yonde so goodly gan she me beholde
That to the death mine hart is to her holde

And at the corner in the yonder house
Herde I mine alderleuest lady dere
So womanly, with voice melodiouse
Singen so wel, so goodly and so clere
That in my soule yet me thinketh I here
The blisful sowne, and in that yonder place
My lady first me toke vnto her grace

Than thouzt he thus, o blisfull lorde Cupide
Whan I the processe haue in memorie
How thou me hast weried on euery side
Men might a boke make of it like a storie
What nede is the to seke on me victorie
Sens I am thine, and holly at thy will
What ioy hast thou thine owne folke to spill

Wel hast thou lorde i wroke on me thine ire
Thou mighty God, and dredful for to greue
Now mercy lorde, thou wost wel I desire
Thy grace moste, of al lustes leue
And liue and die I wol in thy beleue
For whiche I ne aske in guerdon but a bone
That thou Creseide aien me sende sone

Distraine her hart as fast to returne
As thou doest mine to longen her to se
Than wote I wel that she nil nat soiourne
Now blisful lorde, so cruel thou ne be
Vnto the blode of Troie, I praie the
As Juno was vnto the blode Thebane
For whiche ẏ folke of Thebes cauzt her bane

And after this he to the yates wente
Ther as Creseide out rode, a full good paas
And vp & doun there made he many a wente
And to him selfe ful oft he said alas
Fro hence rode my blisse and my solas
As would blisful God now for his ioie
I might her sene ayen come to Troie

And to the yonder hil I gan her gide
Alas, and there I toke of her my leue
And yonde I sawe her to her father ride
For sorow of whiche mine hart shal to cleue
And hither home I come whan it was eue
And here I dwel, out cast from al ioie
And shal, til I maie sene her efte in Troie

And of him selfe imagined he ofte
To ben defaited, pale, and woxen lesse
Than he was wonte, & that men saiden softe
What may it be? who can the sothe gesse
Why Troilus hath al this heuinesse
And al this nas but his melancolie
That he had of him selfe suche fantasie

Another time imaginen he would
That euery wight that went by the wey
Had of him routhe, & that thei saine should
I am right sory, Troilus wol dey
And thus he droue a daie yet forth or twey
As ye haue herde, suche life gan he lede
As he that stode betwixen hope and drede

For which him liked in his songes shewe
Thencheson of his wo, as he best might
And made a songe, of wordes but a fewe
Somwhat his wofull hart for to light
And when he was from euery mannes sight
With softe voice, he of his lady dere
That absent was, gan sing as ye maie here

O sterre, of whiche I lost haue all the light
With hart sore, wel ought I to bewaile
That euer derke in turment, night by night
Towarde my deth, ẇ winde I stere and saile
For whiche the tenth night, if that I faile
The giding of thy bemes bright an houre
My ship and me Caribdes woll deuoure

This songe when he thus songen had sone
He fil aien into his sighes olde
And euery night, as was his wont to doone
He stode the bright moone to beholde
And al his sorowe he to the moone tolde
And said, i wis whan thou art horned newe
I shal be glad, if al the world be trewe

I saw thine hornes olde eke by that morow
Whan hence rode my right lady dere
That cause is of my turment and my sorow
For whiche, o bright Lucina the clere
For loue of God ren fast about thy spere
For whan thine hornes newe ginnen spring
Than shal she come that maie my blisse bring

The daie is more, and lenger euery night
Than thei ben wont to be, him thought tho
And that the sunne went his course vnright
By lenger waie than it was wonte to go
And said, i wis I drede me euer mo
The sunnes sonne Pheton be on liue
And that his fathers carte amisse he driue

Upon the walles fast ebe would he walke
And on the Grekes host he would se
And to him selfe right thus he would talke
Lo, yonder is mine owne lady fre
Or els yonder, there the tentes be
And thence cometh this ayre that is so soote
That in my soule I fele it doth me boote

And hardly this winde that more and more
Thus stoundmele encreaseth in my face
Is of my ladies depe sighes sore
I preue it thus, for in none other space
Of al this toun, saue onely in this place
Fele I no winde, that souneth so like paine
It saith alas, why twined be we twaine

This longe time he driueth forth right thus
Til fully passed was the ninthe night
And aie beside him was this Pandarus
That besily did all his full might
Him to comfort, and make his hart light
Yeuing him hope alway the tenthe morow
That she shal comen, & stinten al his sorow

Upon that other side ebe was Creseide
With women fewe, among the grekes strong
For whiche ful oft a day, alas she seide
That I was borne, wel maie mine hart long
After my death, for now liue I to long
Alas, and I ne may it not amende
For now is worse than euer yet I wende

My father nil for nothing do me grace
To gone ayen, for aught I can him queme
And if so be, that I my terme pace
My Troilus shal in his hart deme
That I am false, and so it maie wel seme
Thus shal I haue vnthonke on euery side
That I was borne so welaway the tide

And if that I me put in ieopardie
To steale awaie by night, and it befal
That I becaught, I shal beholde a spie
Or els lo, this drede I most of al
If in the hondes of some wretche I fal
I nam but lost, al be mine hart trewe
Now mighty God, thou on my sorow rewe

Ful pale iworen was her bright face
Her limmes leane, as she that al the daie
Stode whan she durst, and loked on the place
There she was borne, and dwelt had aie
And al the night weping alas she laie
And thus dispeired out of al cure
She lad her life, this woful creature

Ful oft a daie she sighed ebe for distresse
And in her selfe she went aie purtraiyng
Of Troilus the great worthinesse
And al his goodly wordes recording
Sens first that daie her loue began to spring
And thus she sette her wofull hart a fire
Through remembraunce of ỹ she gan desire

In all this world there nis so cruel hart
That her had herd complainen in her sorow
That nold haue weptē for her paines smart
So tenderly she wept, bothe eue and morow
Her neded no teeres for to borow
And this was yet the worst of all her paine
Ther was no wight, to whom she durst plaine

Ful rewfully she loked vpon Troie
Beheldе the Toures high, and ebe the Hallis
Alas (q she) the pleasaunce and the ioie
The whiche that now al turned into gallis
Haue I had ofte, within yonder wallis
O Troilus, what doest thou now she seide
Lord whether thou yet thinke vpon Creseide

Alas, that I ne had itrowed on your lore
And went with you, as ye me redde er this
Than had I now not sighed halfe so sore
Who might haue said, that I had don amis
To steale awaie with suche one as he is
But al to late cometh the lectuarie
Whan men the corse vnto the graue carie

To late is now to speke of that matere
Prudence alas, one of thine eien thre
Me lacked alway, er that I came here
For on time passed wel remembred me
And present time ebe coulde I wel se
But future time, er I was in the snare
Could I not sene, that causeth now my care

But natheless, betide what betide
I shal to morow at night, by eest or west
Out of this hoste steale, on some side
And gon with Troilus, where as him lest
This purpose wol I holde, and this is ỹ best
No force of wicked tonges ionglerie
For euer on loue, haue wretches had Enuie

For who so wol of euery worde take hede
Or rule hem by euery wightes wit
Ne shal he neuer thriuen out of drede
For that that some men blamen euer yet
Lo, other maner folke commenden it
And as for me, for al suche variaunce
Felicite clepe I my suffisaunce

For whiche, without any wordes mo
To Troie I wol, as for conclusioun
But God it wote, er fully monthes two
She was ful ferre fro that entencioun
For bothe Troilus and Troie toun
Shal knotlesse throughout her hart slide
For she wol take a purpose for to abide

This Diomede, of whom I you tel gan
Goth now within himselfe aie arguing
With al the sleight and al that euer he can
How he maie best with shortest tarying
Into his nette Creseides hart bring
To this entent he couthe neuer fine
To fisshen her, he laide out hoke and line

But natheless, wel in his hart he thought
That she nas nat without a loue in Troie
For neuer sithen he her thence brought
Ne couthe he sene her laugh, or maken ioie
He nist how best her hart for tacoie
But for tasley, he said nought it ne greueth
For he ȳ naught assaieth naught atcheueth

yet said he to him selfe vpon a night
Now am I nat a fole, that wote wel howe
Her wo is, for loue of another wight
And herupon to gon assaie her nowe
I maie well wete, it nil nat ben my prowe
For wise folke in bokes it exprelle
Men shal nat wowe a wight in heuinesse

But who so might winnen suche a floure
Fro him, for whō she mourneth night & daie
He might saine he were a conqueroure
And right anone, as he that bolde was aie
Thought in his hart, hap how hap maie
Al should I die, I wol her hart seche
I shal no more lesen but my speche

This Diomede, as bokes vs declare
Was in his nedes prest and corragious
With sterne voice, and mighty limmes square
Hardy, testife, strong, and cheualrous
Of dedes like his father Tidius
And some men saine, he was of tonge large
And heire he was, of Calcidony and Arge

Creseide meane was of her stature
Therto of shappe, of face, and eke of chere
There might ben no fairer creature
And ofte time this was her maner
To gone itressed with her heeres clere
Doune by her colere, at her bache behinde
Which with a threde of gold she would binde

And saue her browes ioyneden ifere
There nas no lacke, in aught I can espien
But for to speken of her eien clere
Lo, truely thei written that her seien
That paradis stode formed in her eien
And with her riche beaute euer more
Stroue loue in her, aie which of hē was more

She sobre was eke, simple, and wise withall
The best inorished eke that might be
And goodly of her speche in generall
Charitable, estately, lusty, and fre
Ne neuer more ne lacked her pite
Tender harted, sliding of corage
But truely I can nat tel her age

And Troilus wel woren was in hight
And complete formed by proporcioun
So wel, that kinde it naught amendē might
yong, fresh, strong, and hardy as Lioun
Trewe as stele, in eche condicioun
One of the best entetched creature
That is or shal, while ȳ the world maie dure

And certainly, in storȳ as I it is fonde
That Troilus was neuer vnto no wight
As in his time, in no degre seconde
In daring do, that longeth to a knight
Al might a Giaunt passen him of might
His hart aie with the first and with the best
Stode peregall to dare done what him lest

But for to tellen forthe of Diomede
It fil, that after on the tenthe daie
Sens that Creseide out of the cite yede
This Diomede, as fresh as braūche in Maie
Came to the tente there as Calcas laie
And fained him with Calcas haue to done
But what he mente, I shal you tellen sone

Creseide at shorte wordes for to tel
Welcomed him, and doun him by her sette
And he was ethe inough to maken dwel
And after this, withouten longe lette
The spices and the wine men forth hem fette
And forthe thei spake of this and that ifere
As frendes done, of whiche some shall ye here

He gan first fallen of the warre in speche
Betwixen hem and the folke of Troie toun
And of thassiege he gan eke her beseche
To tellen him what was her opintoun
Fro that demaunde he so discendeth doun
To aske her, if that her straunge thought
The grekes gise, & werkes that thei wrought

And why her father tarieth so long
To wedden her vnto some worthy wight
Creseide that was in her paines strong
For Loue of Troilus her owne knight
So ferforth as she conning had or might
Inswerde him tho, but as of his entente
It semed nat she wiste what he mente

But natheless this ilke Diomede
Gan on him selfe assure, and thus he seide
If I aright haue taken on you hede
Me thinketh thus, o lady mine Creseide
That sens I first hond on your bridel leide
When I out came of Troie by the morow
Me might I neuer sene you but in sorow

I can nat saine what maie the cause be
But if for loue of some Troian it were
The whiche right sore would a thinken me
That ye for any wight that dwelleth there
Shulden spil a quarter of a teere
Or pitously your selfen so begile
For dredelesse it is nat worthe the while

The folke of Troie, as who saith al and some
In prison ben, as ye your selfen se
Fro thence shal nat one on liue come
For al the Golde atwixen sunne and see
Trusteth wel, and vnderstondeth me
There shal nat one to mercy gone on liue
Al were he lord of worldes twise liue

Such wrech on hem for fetching of Heleine
There shal be take, er that we hence wende
That Maunes, whiche ỹ goddes ben of peine
Shal ben agast that Grekes wol hem shende
And men shal drede vnto the worldes ende
From hence forthe, to rauishen any Quene
So cruel shal our wreche on hem be sene

And but if Calkas lede vs with ambages
That is to saine, with double wordes slie
Suche as men clepen a word ẅ two visages
ye shal wel knowen that I nat ne lie
And al this thing right sene it with your eie
And that anon, ye nil nat trowe how soone
Now taketh hede, for it is for to donne

what wene ye your wise father would
Hauen yeuen Antenor for you anon
If he ne wiste that the cite should
Distroied ben: why nay so mote I gone
He knew ful wel there shal nat scapen one
That Troian is, and for the great fere
He durst nat that ye dwelt lenger there

what wol ye more, o louesom lady dere
Let Troie and Troians fro your hart passe
Driue out ỹ bitter hope, & make good chere
And clepe ayen the beaute of your face
That ye with salte teeres so deface
For Troie is brought in suche a ieopardie
That it to saue is now no remedie

And thinketh wel, ye shal in Grekes finde
A more parfite loue, er it be night
Than any Troian is, and more kinde
And bet to seruen you wol don his might
And if ye vouchsafe my lady bright
I wol ben he, to seruen you my selue
Ye leauer than be lorde of Greces twelue

And with that worde he gan to waxen reed
And in his speche a litel while he quoke
And cast aside a litel with his heed
And stinte a while, and afterwarde he woke
And sobrely on her he threwe his loke
And said I am, al be it to you no ioie
As gentil a man, as any wight in Troie

For if my father Tideus, he seide
Liued had, I had ben er this
Of Calcidony and Arge a king Creseide
And so hope I that I shal be i wis
But he was slaine alas, the more harme is
Vnhappely at Thebes al to rathe
Polimite, and many a man to scathe

But hart mine, sithe that I am your man
And ben the first, of whom I seche grace
To serue you as hertely as I can
And euer shal while I to liue haue space
So that, er I departe out of this place
ye wol me graunt that I maie to morow
At better laiser tel you of my sorow

what should I tell his wordes that he seide?
He spake inough for o daie at the nest
It preueth wel he spake so, that Creseide
Graunted on the morow at his request
For to speke with him at the leest
So that he nolde speke of suche matere
And thus she to him said, as ye nowe here

As she that had her hart on Troilus
So fast, that there maie it none arace
And straungely she spake, and said thus
O Diomede, I loue thine ilke place
There I was borne, and I loues of thy grace
Deliuer it sone of al that doth it care
God for thy might so leue it wel to fare

That grekes wold her wrath on Troy wreke
If that thei might I know it wel iwis
But it wal naught befallen as ye speke
And God to forne, and farther ouer this
I wote my father wise and redy is
And that he me hath bought, as ye me tolde
So dere am I to more vnto him holde

That Grekes ben of high condicioun
I wote eke well, but certaine men shall finde
As worthy folke within Troie toun
As conning, as parfite, and as kinde
As ben betwixt Orcades and Inde
And that ye coulde wel your lady serue
I trowe eke wel, her thonke for to deserue

But as to speke of loue, iwis she seide
I had a lorde, to whom I wedded was
The whose mine hart was al til he deide
And other loue, as helpe me now Pallas
There in mine hart nis, ne neuer was
And that ye ben of noble and high kinrede
I haue wel herde it tellen out of drede

And that doth me to haue so great a wonder
That ye wol scornen any woman so
Eke God wote, loue and I ben fer a sonder
I am disposed bet so mote I go
Vnto my death plaine and make wo
What I shal after done, I can nat saie
But truely as yet me liste nat plaie

Mine hart is now in tribulacioun
And ye in armes bely daie by daie
Hereafter when ye wonnen haue the toun
Parauenture than, so it happen maie
That whan I se that I neuer ere saie
Than wol I werke that I neuer ere wrouzt
This worde to you inough sufficen ought

To morow eke wol I speken with you faine
So that ye toucheu naught of this matere
And whan you list, ye maie come here againe
And er ye gen, thus muche I saie you here
As helpe me Pallas, with her heeres clere
Yf that I should of any Grehe haue routhe
It should be your selue by my trouthe

I saie nat therfore that I wol you loue
Ne saie nat naie, but in conclusioun
I meane wel by God that sit aboue
And therwithal she cast her eien doun
And gan to sigh a lasd, Troilus a Troie toun
Yet bidde I God, in quiet and in rest
I maie you sene or do mine hart brest

But in effecte, and shortely for to saie
This Diomede al freshly newe againe
Gan pressen on, and fast her mercy praie
And after this the sothe for to saine
Her gloue he toke, of which he was ful faine
And finally, whan it was woren eue
And al was wel, he rose and toke his leue

The bright Venus folowed and aie taught
The waie there brode Phebus doune alight
And Cithera her chare horse ouer raught
To whirle out of the Lion, if she might
And Signifer his candels sheweth bright
Whan that Creseide vnto her bed wente
Within her fathers faire bright tente

Retourning in her soule aie vp and doun
The wordes of this sodaine Diomede
His great estate, and peril of the toun
And that she was alone, and had nede
Of frendes helpe, and thus began to brede
The cause why, the sothe for to tell
She toke fully purpose for to dwell

The morow came, and goodly for to speke
This Diomede is come vnto Creseide
And shortly, lest that ye my tale breke
So wel he for him selfe spake and seide
That al her sighes sore, doun he leide
And finally, the sothe for to saine
He lefte her the great of al her paine

And after this, the story telleth vs
That she him yaue the faire baie stede
The whiche she ones wan of Troilus
And eke a broche (and that was litel nede)
That Troilus was, she yaue this Diomede
And eke the bet from sorowe him to releue
See made him weare a pencel of her sleue

I finde eke in stories eis where
Whan through the body hurt was Diomede
Of Troilus, tho wepte she many a teere
Whan that she saw his wide woundes blede
And that she toke to kepen him good hede
And for to healen him of his smarte
Wen saine I not, ỹ she yaue him her harte

But truely the story telleth vs
There made neuer woman more wo
Than she, whan that she failed Troilus
She larde alas, for now is clene ago
My name in trouthe of loue, for euermo
For I haue failed one the gentillest
That euer was, and one the worthiest

Alas,

Alas, of me vnto the worldes ende
Shall neither been iwritten or isong
No good worde, for these bokes woll me shēde
Trolled shall I been on many a tong
Throughout the world, my bell shall be rong
And women moste woll hate me of all
Alas, that soche a caas me should fall.

Thei woll sain, in as moche as in me is
I haue hem doen dishonour welawaie
Ill be I not the first that did amis
what helpeth that, to doen my blame awaie
But sens I se there is no better waie
And that to late is now for me to rue
To Diomede I woll algate be true.

But Troilus, sens I no better maie
And sens that thus departen ye and I
yet praie I God so yeue you right good daie
As for the gentillest knight truely
That euer I sawe, to seruen faithfully
And best can aie his ladies honour kepe
And with that worde she brast anon to wepe

And certes you ne haten shall I neuer
And frendes loue, that shall ye haue of me
And my good worde, all should I liuen euer
And truely I would right sorie be
For to seen you in aduersite
And giltlesse I wot well I you leaue
And all shall passe, and thus take I my leaue

But truely how long it was bitwene
That she forsoke him for this Diomede
There is none aucthour telleth it I wene
Take euery man now to his bookes hede
He shall no terme finden, out of drede
For though that he began to wowe her sone
Er he her wan, yet was there more to doen.

For me ne list this selie woman chide
Ferther than the storie woll deuise
Her name alas, is published so wide
That for her gilt it ought inough suffice
And if I might excuse her in any wise
For she so sorie was for her vntrouthe
Iwis I would excuse her yet for routhe.

This Troilus, as I before haue told
Thus driueth forth, as wel as he hath might
But oft was his harte hote and cold
And namely that ilke nin the night
Which on the morowe she had him behight
To come ayen, God wote full little rest
Had he that night, nothing to slepe him lest.

The laurer crouned Phebus, with his heate
Gan in his course aie vpward as he went
To warmen of the East sea the waues weate
And Circes doughter song, with freshe entēt
Whan Troilus his Pandare after sent
And on the walles of the toune thei pleide
To loke, if thei can seen aught of Creseide.

Till it was noone, thei stoden for to se
Who that there came, and euery maner wight
That came fro ferre, thei saiden it was she
Till that thei coulden knowen him aright
Now was his harte dull, now was it light
And thus betraped stoden for to stare
About naught, this Troilus and Pandare.

To Pandarus, this Troilus tho seide
For aught I wot, before noone sikerly
Into this toune ne cometh not here Creseide
She hath inough to doen hardely
To winnen from her father, so trowe I
Her old father woll yet make her dine
Er that she go, God yeue his harte pine.

Pãdarus answerd, it maie well been certain
And for thy let vs dine, I thee beseche
And after noone than maist thou come again
And home thei go, without more speache
And comen ayen, but long maie thei seache
Er that thei finde that thei after gape
Fortune hem bothe thinketh for to iape.

(q Troilus) I se well now that she
Is taried with her old father so
That er she come it woll nigh euen be
Come forthe; I woll vnto the yate go
These porters been vnbonning euermo
And I woll doen hem holden vp the yate
As naught ne were, although she come late.

The daie goth fast, and after that cam eue
And yet came nat to Troilus Creseide
He loketh forth by hedge, by tree, by greue
And ferre his hedde ouer the wall he leide
And at the last he tourned him, and seide
By God I wote her meaning now Pandare
Almoste iwis all newe was my care.

Now doubtlesse this Ladie can her good
I wote she cometh riding priuely
I commende her wisedome by mine hood
She woll nat maken people nicely
Gaure on her whan y she cometh, but softely
By night into the toune she thinketh ride
And dere brother, thinke nat long to abide.

We haue naught elſ for to doen iwis
And Pandarus, now wilt thou trowen me
Haue here my trouth I ſe her, yond ſhe is
Heaue vp thine iyen man, maieſt thou nat ſe
Pandare anſwerde, naie ſo mote I thee
All wrong by God, what ſaiſt ỹ mā wher art
That I ſe yonde, nis but a farre eart.

Alas thou ſaieſt right ſothe (q Troilus)
But hardely it is not all for nought
That in mine harte I now reioice thus
It is ayenſt ſome good, I haue a thought
Not I nat how, but ſens ỹ I was wrought
Ne felt I ſoche a comfort dare I laie
She cometh to night, my life that durſt I lay

Pandarus anſwerde, it maie be well inough
And helde with him, of all that euer he laied
But in his harte he thought, and ſoft lough
And to himſelf full ſoberly he ſaied
From haſelwodde, there ioly Robin plaied
Shall come all that thou abideſt here
Ye, farwell all the ſnowe of ferne yere.

The wardein of the yates gan to call
The folke, which that without the yates wer
And badde hem driuen in her beaſtes all
Or all the night thei muſt bleuen there
And ferre within the night, wᵗ̄ many a teare
This Troilus gan homward for to ride
For well he ſeeth it helpeth nat to abide.

But natheleſſe he gladded him in this
He thought he miſacompted had his daie
And ſaied, I vnderſtande haue all amis
For thilke night I laſt Creſeide ſaie.
She ſaied I ſhall been here, if that I maie
Er that the Mone, O dere harte ſwete
The Lion paſſe, out of this Ariete.

For whiche ſhe maie yet hold all her beheſt
And on the morowe, vnto the yate he went
And vp and doune, by weſt and eke by eaſt
Vpon the walles made he many a went
But al for naught, his hope alway him blēt
For which at night, in ſorow and ſighes ſore
He went him home, withouten any more.

This hope all cleane out of his hart fledde
He ne hath wheron now lenger for to hong
But for the pain him thought his hart bledd
So wer his throwes ſharp, a wonder ſtrong
For whan he ſawe that ſhe abode ſo long
He wiſt what he iudgen of it might
Sens ſhe hath broken that ſhe him behight.

The thirde, fourth, fifte, and ſixt daie
After tho daies tenne, of whiche I told
Betwixen hope and drede his harte laie
Yet ſomwhat truſting on her helles old
But whan he ſawe ſhe nolde her terme hold
He can now ſeen none other remedie
But for to ſhape him ſone for to die.

Ther with the wicked ſpirit, God vs bleſſe
Which that men clepen woode ialouſie
Gan in him crepe, in all this heuineſſe
For whiche bicauſe he would ſone die
He ne eate ne dronke for his melancolie
And eke from euery companie he fledde
This was the life that all this time he ledde.

He ſo defaite was, that no maner man
Vnneth he might knowen there he went
So was he leane, and therto pale and wan
And feble, that he walketh by potent
And with his ire he thus himſelf ſhent
But who ſo aſked him wherof him ſmarte
He ſaied, his harme was all about his harte

Priam full oft, and eke his mother dere
His brethrene and his ſuſtren gan him frain
Why he ſo ſorowfull was in all his chere
And what thing was the cauſe of al his pain
But all for naught, he nolde his cauſe plain
But ſaied, he felt a greuous maladie
About his harte, and fain he would die.

So on a daie he laie him doune to ſlepe
And ſo bifell that in ſlepe him thought
That in a foreſt faſt he walked to wepe
For loue of her, ỹ him theſe paines wrought
And vp and doune, as he that foreſt ſought
He met he ſawe a Bore, with tuſkes greate
That ſlept ayenſt the bright Sunnes heate.

And by this Bore, faſt in her harmes fold
Laie kiſſing aie his ladie bright Creſeide
For ſorowe of whiche, whan he it gan behold
And for diſpite, out of his ſlepe he breide
And loude he cried on Pandarus, and ſeide
O Pandarus, now knowe I crop and roote
I nam but dedde, there nis none other boote

My lady bright Creſeide hath me betraide
In whom I truſted moſte of any wight
She els where hath now her harte apaied
The blikfull Goddes, through her great miȝt
Haue in my dreame ſhewed it full right
Thus in my dreame, Creſeide haue I beholde
And all this thing to Pandarus he tolde.

O my Creseide alas, what subtilte?
What newe lust? What beaute, what science?
What wrathe of iuste cause haue ye to me?
What gilt of me? What fell experience
Hath me rafte alas? thine aduertence
O trust, O faithe, O depe assuraunce
Who hath me raft Creseide, all my plesaunce

Alas, why let I you from hens go?
For whiche well nigh out of my wit I breide
Who shall now trowe on any othes mo?
God wote I wende, O Ladie bright Creseide
That euery worde was Gospell that ye seide
But who maie bet begile, if him list
Than he on whom men wenen best to trist.

What shall I doen, my Pandarus alas?
I fele now so sharpe a newe pain
Sens that there is no remedy in this caas
That bet were it, I with mine hōdes twain
My seluen slowe, than alwaie thus to plain
For throuz ẏ death my wo shuld haue an ende
There euery daie with life my self I shende.

Pandare answerde and said, alas the while
That I was borne, haue I nat saied er this
That dreames many a maner man begile
And why? For folke expounden hem amis
How darst thou sain that false thy ladie is
For any dreame, right for thine owne drede
Let be this thought, ẏ canst no dreames rede

Parauenture there thou dremest of this bore
It maie so be that it maie signifie
Her father, whiche that old is and eke hore
Ayen the sonne lieth on poinct to die
And she for sorowe ginneth wepe and crie
And kisseth him, there he lieth on the ground
Thus shuldest thou thy dreme arizt expound

How might I than doen (q̃ Troilus)
To knowe of this, yea were neuer so lite
Now saiest thou wisely (q̃ this Pandarus)
My rede is this, sens thou canst well endite
That hastely a letter thou her write
Through which thou shalt wel bringē about
To knowe a soth, of that thou art in doubt

And se now why? for this I dare well sain
That if so is, that she vntrue be
I can not trowen that she woll write again
And if she write, thou shalt full sone isee
As whether she hath any liberte
To come ayen, or els in some clause
If she be let, she woll assigne a cause.

Thou hast not written to her sens ẏ she went
Nor she to thee, and this I durst laie
There maie soche cause been in her entent
That hardely thou wolt thy seluen saie
That her abode the best is for you twaie
Now write her than, and thou shalt fele sone
A sothe of all, there is no more to doen.

Acorded been to this conclusioun
And that anon, these ilke lorde two
And hastely sate Troilus adoun
And rolleth in his harte to and fro
How he maie best discriuen her his wo
And to Creseide his owne ladie dere
And wrote right thus, & said as ye maie here

¶ The copie of the letter.

Right fresh flour, whose I haue been & shall
Withouten part of els where seruice
With harte, bodie, life, lust, thought, and all
I wofull wight, in euery humble wise
That tong can tell, or harte maie deuise
As oft as matter occupieth place
Me recommaunde vnto your noble grace

Liketh it you to weten swete harte
As ye well knowe, how long time agon
That ye me left in aspre paines smarte
Whan that ye went, of whiche yet bote non
Haue I non had, but euer worse bigon
Fro daie to daie am I, and so mote dwell
While it you list, of wele and wo my well.

For whiche to you, with dredefull harte true
I write, as he that sorowe driueth to write
My wo, that euery houre encreaseth newe
Complaining as I dare, or can endite
And that defaced is, that maie ye wite
The teares, which that from mine iyen rain
That wulden speke, if that thei durst & plain

You first beseche I, that your iyen clere
To loke on this defouled ye nat hold
And ouer all this, that ye my ladie dere
Woll vouchsafe this letter to behold
And by the cause eke of my cares cold
That slaeth my wit, if aught amis me starte
Foryeue it me, mine owne swete harte.

If any seruaunt durst or onght of right
Upon his ladie pitously complain
Than wene I that I ought be that wight
Considred this, that ye these monthes twain
Haue taried, there ye saiden sothe to sain
But tenne daies ye nolde in hoste soiourne
But in two monethes, yet ye not retourne.

But

But for as moche, as me mote nedes like
All that you list, I dare nat plain moze
But humbly, with sozowfull sighes sike
You write I mine vnrestie sozowes soze
Fro daie to daie, desiring euer moze
To knowen fully, if your will it were
How ye haue fared and don while ye be there

Whose welfare and heale eke God encrease
In honour soche, that vpward in degree
It growe alwaie, so that it neuer cease
Right as your harte aie can my ladie free
Deuse, I praie to God so mote it be
And graunt it that ye sone vpon me rewe
As wisely as in all I am to you true.

And if you liketh knowen of the fare
Of me, whose wo there may no wizt discriue
I can no moze, but chest of euery cary
At writing of this letter I was on liue
All redy out my wofull ghost to dziue
Whiche I delaie, and holde him yet in honde
Upon the sight of matter of your sonde.

Mine iyen two in vain, with whiche I se
Of sozowfull teares salt arn woxen wellis
My song in plaint of mine aduersite
My good in harme, mine ease eke worē hel is
My ioie in wo, I can sey now nought ellis
But tourned is, for whiche my life I warie
Euery ioie or ease in his contrarie.

Iwis mine owne dere harte true
I wote that whan ye next vpon me se
So lost haue I mine heale, & eke mine hewe
Creseide shall not conne knowen me
Iwis mine hartes daie, my ladie fre
So thursteth aie mine harte to behold
your beaute, that vnneth my life I hold.

I saie no moze, all haue I for to sey
To you well moze than I tell maie
But whether that ye doe me liue or dey
yet praie I God, so yeue you right good daie
And fareth well goodly faire freshe Maie
As ye that life or death me maie commaunde
And to your trouthy aie I me recommaunde.

With heale soche, that but ye yeuen me
Thesame heale, I shall non heale haue
In you lieth, whan you list that it so be
The daie in whiche me clothē shall my graue
And in you my life, in you might for to saue
Me fro disease of all paines smarte
And fare now well mine owne swete harte.

Le vostre T.

This letter forthe was sent vnto Creseide
Of whiche her answere in effect was this
Full pitously she wrote ayen, and seide
That also sone as she might iwis
She would come, & amēde all that was amis
And finally she wrote and saied then
She would come, ye, but she nist when.

But in her letter made she soche festes
That wonder was, & swoze she loued him best
Of whiche he founde but botomles bihestes
But Troilus thou maiest now East and West
Pipe in an Iuie leafe if that thee lest
thus goth ỹ world, god shild vs fro mischaūce
And euery wight ỹ meaneth trouth auaunce

Encresen gan the wo fro daie to night
Of Troilus, for tarying of Creseide
And lessen gan his hope and eke his might
For whiche al doun he in his bedde him leide
He ne eate, dronke, ne slept, ne worde seide
Imagining aie that she was vnkinde
For which well nigh he wext out of his mind

This dreme, of which I told haue eke before
Maie neuer come out of his remembraunce
He thought aie well, he had his ladie lorn
And that Ioues, of his purueiaunce
Him shewed had in slepe the signifiaunce
Of her vntrouth, and his disauenture
And that the boze was shewed him in figure

For

For whiche he for Sibille his suster sent
That called was Cassandre eke all about
And all his dreame he told her er he stent
And her besought assoilen him the doubt
Of the strong Bore, with tuskes stout
And finally, within a little stounde
Cassandre him gan thus his dreme expound.

She gã first smile, and said O brother dere
If thou a sothe of this desirest to knowe
Thou must a fewe of old stories heare
To purpose how that fortune ouerthrowe
Hath lordes old, through which win a throw
Thou shalt this Bore know, & of what kinde
He comen is, as men in bokes finde.

Diane, whiche that wroth was and in ire
For Grekes nolde doen her Sacrifice
Ne encens vpon her Altar set on fire
She for that Grekes gon her so dispise
Wrake her in a wonder cruell wise
For with a Bore as greate as oxe in stall
She made vp frete her corne and vines all.

To slea ẏ Bore was all the countrie reised
Emong whiche there came this Bore to
A maied, one of this worlde the best ipraised
And Meleager, lorde of that countre
He loued so this freshe maiden fre
That with his manhode, er he would stent
This Bore he slough, and her the hed he sent

Of whiche, as old bokes tellen vs
There rose a conteke and a greate enuie
And of this Lorde discended Tideus
By ligne, or els old bokes lie
But how this Meleager gan to die
Through his mother, woll I you not tell
For all to long it were for to dwell.

She tolde eke how Tideus, er she stent
Unto the strong cite of Thebes
(To claimen kingdome of the cite) went
For his felawe dan Polimites
Of whiche the brother dan Ethiocles
Full wrongfully of Thebes held the strength
This tolde she by processe all by length.

She tolde eke how Hemonides astarte
Whan Tideus slough fiftie knightes stoute
She tolde eke all the Prophesies by harte
And how that seuen kinges with her rout
Besiegeden the cite all aboute
And of the holie Serpent, and the well
And of the furies all she gan him tell.

Associat profugum, Tideus primo Polimidem
Tidea legatum docet insidiasq; secundis
Tertius Hermodien canit & vates latitantes
Mors furie Leuine quinto narrantur & angues
Quartus habet reges ineuntes prelia septem
Archynon bustum, sexto ludiq; leguntur
Dat Graios Thebes vatem septimis vmbris
Octauo cecidit Tideus spes vita pelagis
Ipomedon nono moritur, cum Parthonepeo
Fulmine percusso, decimo Canapus superatur
Vndecimo sese perimunt per vulnera fratres
Argiuam flentem, narrat duodenis & ignem.

Of Archinories buriyng, and the plaies
And how Amphiorax fill through ẏ grounde
How Tideus was slain, lorde of Argeies
And how Hipomedon in a little stounde
Was dreint, and dedde Parthonepe of wound
And also how Campaneus the proude
With thõder dint was slain, that cried loude.

He gan eke tell him how that either brother
Ethiocles and Polimites also
At a scarmishe, eche of hem slough other
And of Argiues weping and her mo
And how the toun was brent she told eke tho
And tho discended doune from iestes old
To Diomede, and thus she spake and told.

This ilke Bore betokeneth Diomede
Tideus sonne, that doune discended is
Fro Meleager, that made the Bore to blede
And thy Ladie, where so she be iwis
This Diomede her harte hath, and she is
Wepe if thou wolt or leaue, for out of doubt
This Diomede is in, and thou art out.

Thou saiest nat sothe (q̃ he) thou sorceresse
With all thy false ghost of Prophecie
Thou wenest been a greate deuineresse
Now seest thou nat this foole of fantasie
Painen her on ladies for to lie
Awaie (q̃ he) there Joues yeue thee sorowe
Thou shalt be fals parauẽture yet to morow

As well thou mightest lien on good Alceste
That was of creatures (but men lie)
That euer weren, kindest and the beste
For whan her husbonde was in ieopardie
To die himself, but if she would die
She chese for him to die, and gon to hell
And starfe anon, as vs the bokes tell.

Cassandre goeth, and he with cruell harte
Foryate his wo, for angre of her speche

And

And fro his bedde all sodainly he starte
As though all hole him had imade a leche
And daie by daie he gan enquire and seche
A sothe of this, with all his full cure
And thus he driueth forthe his auenture.

Fortune, whiche that permutacion
Of all thinges hath, as it is her committed
Through purueiaunce and disposicion
Of high Joue, as reignes shall been flitted
Fro folk in folk, or whā thei shal ben smitted
Gan pull awaie the fethers bright of Troie
Fro daie to daie, till thei been bare of ioie.

Emong all this, the fine of the ieopardie
Of Hector gan approchen wonder bliue
The fate would his soule should vnbodie
And shapen had a meane it out to driue
Ayenst whiche fate him helpeth not to striue
But on a daie to fighten gan he wende
At whiche alas, he caught his liues ende.

For whiche me thinketh euery maner wight
That haunteth armes, ought to bewaile
The death of him that was so noble a knight
For as he drough a king by thauentaile
Unware of this, Achilles through the maile
And through the bodie gan him for to riue
And thus the worthy knight was reft of liue

For whom as old bokes tellen vs
Was made soch wo, that tong it maie nat tel
And namely the sorowe of Troilus
That next him was of worthinesse the well
And in this wo gan Troilus to dwell
That what for sorowe, loue, and for vnrest
Full oft a daie he bad his harte brest.

But nathelesse, though he gon him dispaire
And drede aie that his ladie was vntrue
Yet aie on her his harte gan repaire
And as these louers doen, he sought aie newe
To get ayen Creseide bright of hewe
And in his harte he went her excusing
That Calcas caused all her tariyng.

And oft time he was in purpose greate
Him seluen like a pilgrim to disgise
To seen her, but he maie not counterfeate
To been vnknowen of folke that weren wise
Ne finde excuse aright that maie suffice
If he emong the Grekes knowen were
For whiche he wept full oft many a teare.

To her he wrote yet oft time all newe
Full pitoussy, he left it nat for slouthe
Beseching her, sens that he was true
That she woll come ayen and hold her trouth
For whiche Creseide vpon a daie for routh
I take it so, touching all this mattere
Wrote him ayen, and saied as ye maie here.

Cupides sonne, ensample of goodlihede
O swerde of knighthode, sours of gentilnesse
How might a wight in turment and in drede
And healelesse you sende, as yet gladnesse
I hartlesse, I sicke, I in distresse
Sens ye with me, nor I with you maie deale
You neither sende I harte maie nor heale.

Your letters full the paper all iplainted
Conceiued hath mine hartes pite
I haue eke seen with teares all depainted
Your letter, and how that ye requiren me
To come ayen, whiche yet ne maie not be
But why, least that this letter founden were
No mencion ne make I now for fere.

Greuous to me (God wote) is your vnrest
Your hast, and that the Goddes ordinaunce
It semeth nat ye take it for the best
Nor other thing nis in your remembraunce
As thinketh me, but onely your pleasaunce
But beth not wroth, and that I you beseche
For that I tarie is all for wicked speche.

For I haue heard well more than I wend
Touching vs two, how thinges haue istond
Whiche I shall with dissimuling amende
And beth nat wroth, I haue eke vnderstonde
How ye ne doe but holden me in honde
But now no force, I can nat in you gesse
But all trouthe and all gentilnesse.

Come I woll, but yet in soche disiointe
I stond as now, that what yere, or what daie
That this shall be, that can I nat apointe
But in effect I praie you as I maie
Of your good worde, & of your frendship aie
For truely while that my life maie dure
As for a frende ye maie in me assure.

Yet praie I you on euill ye ne take
That it is short, whiche that I to you write
I dare nat there I am well letters make
Ne neuer yet ne could I well endite
Eke greate effect, men write in place lite
Thentent is all, and nat the letters space
And fareth well, God haue you in his grace.

La vostre C.

This

This Troilus thouȝt this letter al straūge
Whan he it sawe, and soȝoufully he sight
Him thought it like a kalendes of eschaunge
But finally he ful ne trowen might
That she ne would him holden that she hight
For with ful iuel wil liste him to leue
That loueth wel i such case thouȝ him greue

But natheleſſe, men sain that at the last
For any thing, men shal the sothe se
And suche a case betide, and that as fast
That Troilus wel vnderstode that she
Nas nat so kinde, as that her ought be
And finally he wote now out of dout
That al is lost, that he hath ben about

Stode on a daie in his melancolie
This Troilus, and in suspectioun
Of her, for whom he wende to die
And so befil, that thȝoughout Troie toun
As was the gise, iborne was vp and doun
A maner cote armoure, as saithe the storie
Before Deiphebe, in signe of his victorie

The whiche cote, as telleth Lollius
Deiphebe it had rente fro Diomede
The same daie, and when this Troilus
It sawe, he gan to taken of it hede
Iuising of the length and of the brede
And al the werke, but as he gan beholde
Ful sodainly his herte gan to colde

As he that on the coler fonde within
A broche, that he Creseide yaue at morow
That she from Troie must nedes twin
In remembraunce of him, and of his sorow
And she him laide ayen her faith to borow
To kepe it aie, but now ful wel he wist
His lady nas no longer on to trist

He goeth him home, and gan ful sone sende
For Pandarus, and al this newe chaunce
And of this broch he tolde him worde & ende
Complaining of her hartes variaunce
His longe loue, his trouth, and his penaunce
And after death, without wordes more
Ful fast he cried, his rest him to restore

Than spake he thus, O lady mine Creseide
Where is your faith, & where is your behest?
Where is your loue, where is your trouth he seide
Of Diomede haue ye now al this fest
Alas, I would haue trowed at the leest
That sens ye nolde in trouthe to me stonde
That ye thus nolde haue holden me in honde

Who shal now trowen on any othes more
Alas I neuer would haue wende er this
That ye Creseide coulde haue chaunged so
Ne but I had agilte, and done amis
So cruel wende I nat your harte i wis
To slee me thus, alas your name of trouthe
Is now forsone, and that is al my routhe

Was there none other broche you list lete
To feste with your newe loue (q he)
But thilke broche that I with teres wete
You yaue, as for a remembraunce of me
None other cause alas, ne had ye
But for dispite, and ebe for that ye mente
All vtterly to shewen your entente

Thȝouȝ which I se, ȝ clene out of your minde
Ye haue me cast, and I ne can nor maie
For al this world, within mine hart finde
To vnlouen you a quarter of a daie
Incursed time I borne was wela waie
That you that done me al this wo endure
Yet loue I best of any creature

Now God (q he) me lende yet the grace
That I maie meten with this Diomede
And truely, if I haue might and space
Yet shal I make I hope his sides blede
Now God (q he) that aughtest taken hede
To forthren trouthe, and wronges to punice
Why nilt thou don a vengeaunce of this vice

O Pandarus, that in dremes for to trifle
Ne blamed hast, and wont art oft vpbreide
Now matst thou sene thy selfe, if that the like
How trewe is new thy nece bright Creseide
In sondry formes (God it wote) he seide
The goddes shewen bothe ioie and tene
In slepe, and by my dreme it is now sene

And certainly, withouten more speche
From hence forthe, as ferforthe as I maie
Mine owne death in armes wol I seche
I retche nat how soone be the daie
But trewely Creseide, swete maie
Whom I haue with al my might iserued
That ye thus done, I haue it nat deserued

This Pandarus, that al these thinges herde
And wiste wel he said a sothe of this
Ne nat a worde ayen to him answerde
For sory of his frendes sorow he is
And shamed for his nece hath done amis
And stante astonied of these causes twaie
As stil as stone, o worde ne coulde he saie

But at the last thus he spake, and seide
Ne brother dere, I may do the no more
What should I saine, I hate iwis Creseide
And God it wote I wol hate her euer more
And that thou me besoughtest don of yore
Hauing vnto mine honour ne my reste
Right no regarde, I did al that the leste

Ne saie I nat this al only for these men
But most for women that betraied be
Through fals folke, god yeue hē sorow amen
That with her great witte and subtilte
Betraien you, and this meueth me
To speke, and in effecte you al I praie
Be the ware of men, & herkeneth what I saie

yf I did aught, that might liken the
It is me lefe, and of this treason now
God wote that it a sorow is to me
And dredelesse, for hartes ease of you
Right faine I would amende it, wist I how
And fro this world, almighty God I praie
Deliuer her soone, I can no more saie

Go litel boke, go my litell tregedie
There God thy maker yet er that I die
So sende me might to make some comedie
But litell boke, make thou none enuie
But subiect ben vnto al poesie
And kisse the steppes, wher as thou seest pace
Of Vergil, Ouide, Homer, Lucan, & Stace

Great was the sorowe & plaint of Troilus
But for the her course fortune aie gan holde
Creseide loueth the sonne of Tideus
And Troilus mote wepe in cares colde
Such is this worlde, who so it can beholde
In eche estate is litell hartes reste
God leue vs to take it for the beste

And for there is so greate diuersite
In English, and in writing of our tonge
So praie I to God, that none miswrite the
Ne the misse metre, for defaute of tonge
And redde where so thou be, or els longe
That thou be vnderstonde, God I beseche
But yet to purpose of my rather speche

In many cruel batail out of drede
Of Troilus, this ilke noble knight
(As men maie in these olde bokes rede)
Was sene his knighthod, & his great might
And dredelesse his ire daie and night
Ful cruelly the Grekes aie abought
(And alwaie most this Diomede) he sought

The wrathe, as I began you for to seie
Of Troilus, the Grekes boughten dere
For thousandes his hondes maden deye
As he that was withouten any pere
Saue in his time Hector as I can here
But welawaie, saue onely goddes wil
Dispitously him slough the fierse Achil

And oft time (I finde) that thei mette
With blody strokes, and with wordes greate
Assaiyng how her speares were whete
And God it wote, with many a cruel heate
Gan Troilus vpon his helme to beate
But natheles, fortune naught ne would
Of out her honde that either dien should

And when that he was slain in this manere
His light goste, ful blisfully is went
Up to the holownesse of the seuenth spere
In his place leting eueriche element
And there he sawe, with ful auisement
The erratike sterres, herkening armonie
With sownes ful of heuinesse melodie

And if I had itaken for to write
The armes of this ilke worthy man
Than would I of his baitelles endite
And for that I to writen first began
Of his loue, I haue said as I can
His worthy dedes, who so liste hem here
Rede Dares, he can tel hem al ifere

And doun from thence, fast he gan auise
This litel spotte of earth, that with the see
Enbraced is, and fully gan dispise
This wretched world, and helde al vanite
To respecte of the plaine felicite
That is in heauen aboue, and at the last
There he was slaine, his loking doun he cast

Beseching euery lady bright of hewe
And euery gentil woman, what she be
Al be it that Creseide was vntrewe
That for that gilte ye be nat wroth with me
Ye maie her gilte in other bokes se
And gladder I would write, if you leste
Penelopes trouth, and good Alceste

And in him selfe he lough, right at the wo
Of hem that wepten for his deathe so fast
And dāpned all our werkes that folowen so
The blinde lust, whiche that may nat last
And shulden al our harte on heauen cast
And for the he went, shortely for to tell
There as Mercury sorted him to dwel

Suche fine hath lo, this Troilus for loue
Suche fine hath all his great worthinesse
Suche fine hath his estate royal aboue
Such fine his lust, such fine hath his noblesse
Suche fine hath false worldes brotelnesse
And thus began his louing of Creseide
As I haue tolde, and in this wise he deide

O yonge freshe folkes, he or she
In whiche ẏ loue vp groweth with your age
Rapaireth home from worldely vanite
And of your hartes, vp casteth the visage
To thilke God, that after his image
You made, and thinketh al nis but a faire
This world that passeth sone, as floures faire

And loueth him, the whiche ẏ right for loue
Upon a crosse our soules for to bey
First starfe and rose, and sit in heuen aboue
For he nil falsen no wight dare I sey
That wol his hart al holly on him ley
And sens he best to loue is, and most meke
What nedeth fained loues for to seke

Lo here of painems, cursed olde rites
Lo here what al her goddes maie auaile
Lo here this wretched worldes appetites
Lo here the fine and guerdon for trauaile
Of Joue, Apollo, of Mars, and such raskaile
Lo here the forme of olde clerkes speche
In poetrie, if ye her bokes seche

O moral Gower, this boke I directe
To the, and to the Philosophicall Strode
To vouchsafe there nede is to correcte
Of your benignitees and zeles goode
And to ẏ sothfast Christ that starfe on roode
Withal mine hart, of mercy euer I praie
And to the lorde aright, thus I speke and saie

Thou one, two, and thre, eterne on liue
That raignest aie in thre, two, and one
Uncircumscript, and all maist circumscriue
Us from visible and inuisible fone
Defende, and to thy mercy euerichone
So make vs Jesus to thy mercy digne
For loue of maide, and mother thin binigne.

¶ Thus endeth the fifth booke, and laste of Troilus: and here foloweth the piteful and dolorous testament of faire Creseide.

The testament of Creseide.

ADoly season till a careful dite
Should coresponde, and be equiuolent
Right so it was whan I began to write
This tragedy, the weder right feruent
Whan aries in middes of the lent
Showres of haile can fro the North discende
That scātly fro the cold I might me defende.

Yet neuerthelesse within mine orature
I stode, whan Titan had his beames bright
Withdrawen doun, and scyled vnder cure
And faire Uenus the beaute of the night
Upraise, and sette vnto the Weste ful right
Her golden face in oppositioun
Of God Phebus directe discending doun

Throuzout ẏ glasse her beames brast so faire
That I might se on euery side me by
The northren winde had purified the aire
And shedde his misty cloudes fro the skie
The froste fresed, the blastes bitterly
Fro poole Artike come whisking loud & shill
And caused me remoue ayenst my will

For I trusted that Uenus loues Quene
To whom somtime I high obedience
My faded hart of loue she would make grene
And therupon with humble reuerence
I thought to praie her hie magnificence
But for great colde as than I letted was
And in my chambre to the fire can pas

Though loue be hote, yet in a man of age
It kindleth nat so soone as in youtheed
Of whom the blode is flowing in a rage
And in the olde, the corage dul and deed
Of whiche the fire outwarde is best remeed
To helpe by phisike wher that nature failed
I am experte, for bothe I haue assailed

I made the fire and beaked me aboute
Than toke I drinke my spirites to comforte
And armed me wel fro the colde theroute
To cutte the winter night & make it shorte
I toke a queare, and lefte al other sporte
Writen by worthy Chaucer glorious
Of faire Creseide, and lusty Troilus

And there I founde after that Diomede
Receiued had that lady bright of hewe
How Troilus nere out of his witte abrede
And wept sore, with visage pale of hewe
For whiche wanhope his teares gan renewe
While Esperus reioysed him againe
Thus while in ioie he liued, & while in paine

Of her behest he had great comforting
Trusting to Troie that she wold make retour
Whiche he desired most, of al erthly thing
For why she was his onely paramour
But whan he sawe passed both day and hour
Of her gaincome, in sorowe can oppresse
His wofull harte, in care and heuinesse

Of his distresse me nedeth nat reherse
For worthy Chaucer in that same boke
In goodly termes, and in ioly verse
Compiled hath his cares who will loke
To breke my slepe another qucare I toke
In which I founde the fatal destany
Of faire Creseide, which ended wretchedly

Who wote if all ỹ Chaucer wrate was trewe
Nor I wote nat if this narracion
Be authorised, or forged of the newe
Of some Poete by his inuencion
Made to reporte the lamentacion
And wofull ende of this lusty Creseide
And what distresse she was in or she deide

Whan Diomede had al his appetite
And more fulfilled of this faire lady
Upon another sette was al his delite
And sende to her a libel repudy
And her excluded fro his company
Than desolate she walked vp and doune
As some men saine, in ỹ courte as commune

O faire Creseide, the floure and a per se
Of Troie & Grece, how were thou fortunate
To chaunge in filthe al thy feminite
And be with fleshly lust so maculate
And go among the Grekes erly and late
So giglotlike, taking thy foule plesaunce
I haue pite the should fall suche mischaunce

Yet neuertheless, what euer men deme or say
In scornfull language of thy brutelnesse
I shall excuse, as ferforth as I may
Thy womanhed, thy wisedome and fairnesse
The which fortune hath put to suche distresse
As her pleased, & nothing throughe the gilte
Of the, through wicked langage to be spilte

This faire lady on this wise destitute
Of al comforte and consolation
Right priuely without felowship or refute
Dischevelde, passed out of the toun
A mile or two vnto a mansioun
Bilded ful gaie, wher her father Calcas
Which than amōg the grekes dwelling was

Whan her he saw, the cause he can enquire
Of her comming, she said sighing ful sore
Fro Diomede had gotten his desire
He wore wery and would of me no more
O Calcas doughter wepe thou nat therfore
Parauenture al cometh for the best
Welcome to me thou art ful dere a gest

This olde Calcas, after the lawe was tho
Was keper of the temple as a preest
In whiche Venus and her sonne Cupido
Were honoured, and his chambre was nest
To which Creseide with bale enewed in brest
Used to passe, her praiers for to saie
While at the last vpon a solempne daie

As custome was, the people ferre and nere
Before the noone, vnto the temple went
With sacrifice deuout in their manere
But stil Creseide heuy in her entent
Into the Church would nat her selfe present
For giuing of the people any deming
Of her expulse fro Diomede the king

But passed into a secrete oratore
Where she might wepe her wofull destany
Behinde her backe, she closed fast the dore
And on her knees bare fel doun in hie
Upon Venus and Cupide angerly
She cried out, and said in this wise
Alas that euer I made you sacrifice

Ye gaue me ones a diuine responsaile
That I should be the floure of loue in Troie
Now am I made an vnworthy outwaile
And al in care translated is my ioie
Who shal me gide, who shal me now conuoie
Sithe I fro Diomede, and noble Troilus
Im clene excluded, as abiect odious

O false Cupide, none is to wite but thou
And the mother of loue, that blinde goddace
Ye caused me vnderstande alwaie and trow
The seede of loue was sowen on my face
And aie grewe grene throuz your sople grace
But now alas, that seede with frost is slaine
And I fro louers lefte and all forlaine

whan

Whan this was said, doun in an extasy
Rauished in spirite, in a dreame she fel
And by apparaunce herde where she did lie
Cupide the King tinging a siluer bel
Which men might here fro heuen into hel
At whose sounde before Cupide aperes
The seuen planets discēding fro their speres

Whiche hath power of al thing generable
To rule and stere by their great influence
Weder and winde, and course variable
And first of al Saturne gaue his sentence
Whiche gaue to Cupide litel reuerence
But as a boistus chorle in his manere
Came crabbedly with austrine loke & chere

His face frounsed, his lere was like the lede
His tethe chattred, and sheuered with ẏ chin
His eien drouped hole sonken in his heed
Out at his nose the mildrop fast gan rin
With lippes blo, and chekes leane and thin
The Ise ickels that fro his heer doune honge
Was wonder great, and as a speare as longe

Attour his belte his liart lockes laie
Feltred vnfaire, ouer fret with frostes hoore
His garment and his gate ful gay of graie
His widdred wede fro him ẏ winde out wore
A boustous bowe within his honde he bore
Under his girdle a fasshe of felone flains
Feddred with ise, and heeded with holstains

Than Jupiter right faire and amiable
God of the sterres in the firmament
And norice to al thing generable
Fro his father Saturne farre different
With burly face, and browes bright and brēt
Upon his heed a garlonde wonders gaie
Of floures faire, as it had ben in Maie

His voice was clere, as cristal was his eien
As golden wier so glittring was his heare
His garment and his gite ful gaie of grene
With golden listes gilte on euery geare
A burly brande about his middle he beare
And in his right hād he had a groundē spere
Of his father, the wrothe fro vs to bere

Next after him came Mars the God of ire
Of strife, debate, and all discencioun
To chide and fight, as fierse as any fire
In harde harnesse hewmonde & habergioun
And on his haunch a rousty fel fauchoun
And in his hande he had a rousty sworde
Writhing his face, with many angry worde

Shaking his brande, before Cupide he come
With reed visage, and grisly glowing eien
And at his mouthe a blubber slode of fome
Like to a bore, whetting his tuskes kene
Right tulsure like, but temperaunce in tene
An horne blewe with many boustous bragge
Whiche al this world w̄ warre hath made to (wagge:
Than faire Phebus, lanterne & lāpe of light
Of man and beest, both fruite and florishing
Tender norice, and banisher of night
And of the worlde, causing by his mouing
And influence, life in al erthly thing
Without comforte of whom of force to nouzt
Must go die, that all this world hath wrouzt

As king royall, he rode vpon a chare
The whiche Phiton somtime gided vnright
The brightnesse of his face whan it was bare
Non might beholde, for persing of his sight
This golden carte with firy beames bright
Foure yoked stedes ful different of hewe
But baite or tiring through the speres drew

The first was sorde, w̄ mane as reed as rose
Called Eoye into the orient
The seconde stede to name, hight Ethiose
Whitely and pale, and somdele ascendent
The thirde Perose, right hote & eke feruent
The fourth was blacke, called Philologee
Which rolleth Phebus doun into the see

Venus was there present, that goddes gay
Her sonnes quarel to defende and make
His owne complaint, cladde in a nice aray
The one halfe grene, thother half sable blake
White heer as Gold, kembet and shede abake
But in her face semed great variaunce
While parfite truth, and whiles inconstaūce

Under smiling she was dissimulate
Prouocatiue with blinkes amorous
And sodainly chaunged and alterate
Angry, as any serpent venomous
Right pungitiue with wordes odious
Thus variaunt she was who liste take kepe
With one eye laugh, and with the other wepe

In tokening that al fleshely paramour
Which Venus hath in rule and gouernaūce
Is somtime swete, somtime bitter and sour
Right vnstable and ful of variaunce
Minged with careful ioye & false pleasaunce
Now hotte now colde, now blith, now ful of (wo
Now grene as lefe, now widred & ago.

With bone in hand, than come Mercurious
Right eloquent and ful of rethoryie
With polite termes and delicious
With penne and inke to repoꝛte al redie
Setting songes, and singing merely
His hode was reed heeled attour his croun
Like til a Poete of the olde faſioun

Boxes he bare with fine electuares
And lugred ſiropes foꝛ digeſtion
Spices belonging to the potiquares
With many holſome ſwete confection
Docter in phiſike cledde in a ſcarlet goun
And furred wel as ſuche one ought to be
Honeſt and good, and nat a woꝛde couth lie

Nert after him come lady Sinthia
The laſte of al, and ſwifteſt in her ſpere
Of colour blake, buſhed with hoꝛnes twa
And in the night ſhe liſteth beſt tapere
Hawe as the leed, of colour nothing clere
Foꝛ al the light ſhe boꝛoweth at her bꝛother
Titan, foꝛ of her ſelfe ſhe hath non other

Her gite was gray and ful of ſpottes blake
And on her bꝛeſt a choꝛle painted ful euen
Bearing a buſhe of thoꝛnes on his bake
Whiche foꝛ his theft mizt clime no ner ỹ heuẽ
Thus when thei gadꝛed were ỹ goddes ſeuen
Mercurius thei choſed with one aſſent
To be foꝛe ſpeker in the parliment

Who had ben there and liking foꝛ to here
His faconde tonge, and termes exquiſite
Of rethoꝛike the pꝛactike he might lere
In bꝛefe ſermon, a pꝛeignant ſentence write
Before Cupide baling his cappe a lite
Sper is the cauſe of that vacacioun
And he anon ſhewde his entencioun

Lo ỹ Cupide, who wol blaſpheme ỹ name
Of his owne God, either in woꝛde oꝛ dede
To all goddes he doeth bothe loſſe and ſhame
And ſhould haue bitter paines to his mede
I ſaie this by yonder wꝛetche Creſeide
The whiche thꝛough me was cõtime flour of
Me ꝫ my mother ſhe ſtately can repꝛoue (loue

Saiying of her great infelicite
I was the cauſe, and my mother Uenus
She called a blinde goddes and might nat ſe
With ſclaunder and defame iniurious
Thus her liuing vncleane and lecherous
She would retoꝛte in me and my mother
To whom I ſhewde my grace aboue al other

And ſithe ye art al ſeuẽ deficate
Perticipant of diuine ſapience
This great iniury done to our hie eſtate
Me thinke ỹ paine we ſhuld make recõpence
Was neuer to goddes done ſuche violence
As wel foꝛ you as foꝛ my ſelfe I ſaie
Therfoꝛe go helpe to reuenge I you pꝛaie

Mercurius to Cupide gaue anſwere
And ſaid, ſir king: my counſaile is that ye
Referre you to the hieſt planet here
And take to him the loweſt of degree
The paine of Creſeide foꝛ to modifie
As God Saturne with him take Sinthia
I am content (ỹ he) to take thei twa

Than thus pꝛoceded Saturne and the Mone
When thei the mater ripely had degeſt
Foꝛ the diſpite to Cupide that ſhe had done
And to Uenus open and manifeſt
In al her life with paine to be oppreſt
And turment ſoꝛe, with ſickneſſe incurable
And to al louers be abhominable

This doleful ſentẽce Saturne toke on hande
And paſſed doun where carefull Creſeide laie
And on her heed he laide a frotty wande
Than laufully on this wiſe can he ſaie
Thy great faireneſſe, and al thy beauty gaie
Thy wanton blode, and eke thy golden heere
Here I exclude fro the foꝛ euermeere

I chaunge thy mirthe into melancoly
Whiche is the mother of al penſiueneſſe
Thy moiſter and thy hete, into colde and dꝛy
Thine inſolence, thy plaie, & thy wantõneſſe
To great diſeaſe, thy pompe and thy richeſſe
Into moꝛtal nede and great penurie
Thou ſuffre ſhalt, and as a begger die

O cruel Saturne, fꝛowarde and angrie
Harde is thy dome, and to malicious
Of faire Creſeide, why haſt thou no mercie
Whiche was ſo ſwete, gentill and amoꝛous
Withdꝛawe thy ſentence and be gracious
As ỹ were neuer, ſo ſheweth thꝛouꝛ thy dede
A wꝛeketul ſentence giuen on Creſeide

Than Sinthia, whã Saturne paſt awaie
Out of her ſeate, diſcended doun bliue
And reed a bill on Creſeide where ſhe laie
Containing this ſentence diffinitiue
Fꝛo heale of body here I thee depꝛiue
And to thy ſickeneſſe ſhalbe no recure
But in dolour thy daies to endure

Thy

Thy chrystal yen menged w blood I make
Thy voice so clere vnplesaunt heer and hace
Thy lustie lere ouerspred with spottes blake
And lumpes hawe appering in thy face
Where thou comest eche man shall flie ỹ place
Thus shalt ỹ go begging fro hous to hous
With cuppe and clapper like a Lazarous.

This doolie dreame, this vgly vilioun
Brought till an ende, Creseide fro it awoke
And all that courte and conuocacioun
Vanished awaie, than rose she vp and toke
A polished glasse, and her shadowe couth loke
And whan she sawe her vilage so deformate
If she in harte were wo, I ne wite God wate

Weping full sore, lo what it is (q she)
With froward langage to moue and stere
Our crabbed Goddes, and so is seen on me
My blaspheming now haue I bought ful dere
All yearthly ioie and mirthe I set arere
Alas this daie, alas this wofull tide
Whan I began with my Goddes to chide.

Be this was saied, a child came fro the hal
To warne Creseide the supper was redie
First knocked at the dooze, and eft couth call
Madame, your father biddeth you cum in hie
He hath marueile so long on grofe ye lie
And saith your beades bethe to long somdele
The Goddes wote all your entent full wele.

q she faire childe, go to my father dere
And praie him come to speake with me anon
And so he did, and saied daughter what chere
Alas (q she) father, my mirthe is gon
How so (q he) and she can all expon
As I haue told, the vengeaunce, & the wrake
For her trespas, Cupide on her couth take.

He loked on her vgly Lepers face
The whiche before was white as Lely flour
Wringing his handes, oftimes saied alace
That he had liued to se that wofull hour
For he knewe well that there was no socour
To her sickenesse, and that doubled his pain
Thus was there care inow betwixt hē twain

Whan thei togider mourned had full lang
q Creseide, father I would nat be kende
Therfore in secrete wise ye let me gange
To yon Hospitall at the tounes ende
And thider some meate for charite me sende
To liue vpon, for all mirthe in this yearth
Is fro me gone, sothe is my wicked werth

Whan in a mantill, and a Beuer hat
With cuppe and clapper wonder priuely
He opened a secrete gate and out therat
Conueied her, that no man should espie
There to a village halfe a mile therbie
Deliuered her in at the Spittell hous
And daily sende her part of his almous.

Sum knew her well & sum had no knowlege
Of her, bicause she was so deformate
With biles blake ouerspred in her vilage
And her faire colour faded and alterate
Yet thei presumed for her hie regrate
And still mourning she was of noble hin
With bitter will there thei toke her Inne.

The daie passed, and Phebus went to rest
The cloudes blake ouerwheled all the Skie
God wote if Creseide were a sorowfull gest
Seing that vncouth fare and herbozie
But meate or drinke she dressed her to lie
In a darke corner of the hous alone
And on this wise weping she made her mone

Here folowith the complaint of Creseide.

Soppe of sorowe sonken into care
O caitife Creseide now and euermare
Gon is thy ioie and al thy mirthe in yearth
Of all blithnesse now art thou blake and bare
There is no salue maie helpe thy sare
Fell is thy fortune, wicked is thy werthe
Thy blisse is banished and thy bale vnderde
Vnder the greate God if I grauen ware
Wher men of Grece ne yet of Troie mizt herd

Where is thy chamber wantonly be seen
With burly bedde and bankers brouded been
Spices and wine to thy colatioun
The cuppes all of gold and siluer shene
Thy swete meates serued in plates clene
With sauerie sauce of a good fashioun
Thy gaie garmētes with many goodly goun
Thy plesaunt laune pinned with goldē pens
All is arere thy greate roialle renoun

Where is thy gardein with thy greces gais
And freshe floures, whiche the quene Floraie
Had painted pleasauntly in euery pane
Where thou were wont full merily in Maie
To walke, and take the dewe bē it was daie

And heare the Merle and Mauise many one
With ladies faire in carrolling to gone
And se the roiall renkes in their raie.

This leper loge take for thy goodly boure
And for thy bed, take now a bounche of stro
For wailed wine and meates thou had tho
Take mouled bread, pirate, and sider soure
But cuppē and clapper is all now ago

My clere voice and my courtly carolling
Is ranke as roke, full hidous heer and hace
Deformed is the figure of my face
To loke on it no people hath liking
So sped in sight, I saie with sore sighing
Liyng emong the leper folke alas.

O ladies faire of Troie and Grece attende
My freile fortune, mine infelicite
My great mischief which no man can amēd
And in your minde a mirrour make of me
As I am now parauenture that ye
For al your might may come to thesame ende
Or els worse if any worse maie be
Beware therefore approches nere your ende.

Nought is your fairnesse but a fading floure
Nought is your famous laude & hie honour
But winde inflate in other mennes eares
Your rosing redde to roting shall retoure
Exemple make of me in your memore
Which of soche thīges, wofull witnes beares
Al welth in yearth, as wind awaie it weares
Beware therfore approcheth nere your hour

Thus chiding with her brerie destenie
Weping, she woke the night fro ende to ende
But all in vain her dole, her carefull crie
might not remedy, ne yet her mourning mēd
A leper ladie rose, and to her wende
And saied, why spurnes thou again the wall
To slea thy self, and mende nothing at all

Sith that thy weping but doubleth thy wo
I counsaile thee make vertue of a nede
So learne to clappe thy clapper to and fro
And learne after the lawe of lepers lede
There was no bote but forthw̄ than she yede
Fro place to place, while cold and hūger sore
Compelled her to be a ranke beggore.

That same time of Troie the garnisoun
Whiche had the chieftain worthy Troilus
Throuz ieoperdy of warre had striken doun
Knightes of Grece in nomber marueilous
With greate triumphe, and laude victoriou
Again to Troie right roially thei rode
The waie wher Creseide with the leper stod

Seing that companie come all with o steui
Thei gaue a crie, and shoke cupps good sped
Worthie lordes, for Goddes loue of heuin
To vs leper, part of your almose dede
Than to her crie noble Troilus toke hede
Hauing pite, nere by the place gan pas
Wher Creseide sat, nat weting what she wa

Than vpon him she kest vp bothe her iyen
And with a blinke it come in till his though
That he somtime her face before had sein
But she was in soche plite he knew her nouz
Yet than her loke into his minde he brough
The swete visage, and amorous blenking
Of faire Creseide, somtime his own derling.

No wonder was, suppose in mind that he
Toke her figure so sone, and so now why
The Idoll of a thing in case maie be
So depe enprinted in the fantasie
That it deludeth the wittes outwardly
And so appereth in forme and like estate
Within the minde, as it was figurate.

A sparke of loue thā til his hart couth spring
And kindeled his bodie in a fire
With hote feuer, in swette, and trembling
Him toke, while he was readie to exspire
To beare his shilde his brest begon to tire
Within a while he chaunged many a hewe
And neuertheles nat one an other knewe.

For knightly pite and memoriell
Of faire Creseide, a girdell gan he take
A purse of gold, and many a gaie iewell
And in the skirte of Creseide doun can shake
Than rode awaie, and nat a worde he spake
Pensife in harte while he came to the toune
And for great care oft sith almoste fell doune

The lepre folke to Creseide than couth draw
To se the equall distribucioun
Of the almose, but whan the gold the sawe
Eche one to other priuely can roun
And saied, yon lorde hath more affectioun
How euer it be, vnto you Lazarous
Than to vs all, we knewe by his almous.

What lorde is yon (q̄ she) haue ye no fele?
That doeth to vs so greate humanite
Yes q̄ a lepre man, I knowe him wele

Sir

Sir Troilus it is, a knight gentle and free
Whan Creseide vnderstode that it was he
Stiffer than stele there sterte a bitter stound
Throughout her hart, & fill doune to ꝑ groũd

Whan she ouercome with sighing sore & sad
With many a carefull crie and cold atone
Now is my brest with stormie stoundes stad
Wrapped in wo wretche full will of one
Than fell in swoun ful oft or she would sone
And euer in her swouning cried she thus
O false Creseide, and true knight Troilus

Thy loue, thy laude, and all thy gentinesse
I compted small in my prosperite
So effated I was in wantonnesse
And clambe vpon the fickell whele so hie
All faithe and loue I promitted to thee
Was in thy self fekell and furious
O false Creseide, and true knight Troilus.

For loue of me thou kept countenaunce
Honest and chast in conuersacion
Of all women protectour and defence
Thou were, and helped their opinion
My minde on fleshly soule affection
Was enclined to lustes lecherous
Fie false Creseide, o true knight Troilus.

Louers beware, and take good hede about
Whom that ye loue, for whan ye suffre pain
I let you wit there is right fewe throughout
Whom ye maie trust to haue true loue again
Proue whan ye woll your labour is in vain
Therefore I rede ye take them as ye finde
For thei are sad as Wedercocke in winde.

Bicause I knowe the greate vnstableneſſe
Brittle as glasse, vnto my self I saie
Trusting in other as greate bruteluesse
As inconstaunt, and as vntrue of laie
Though some be true, I wot rizt few ar thei
Who findeth truthe, let him his lady ruse
None but my self as now I woll accuse.

Whan this was said, with paper she sat doun
And in this maner made her testament
Here I bequeth my corse and carioun
With wormes and with Toodes to be rent
My cuppe, my clapper, and mine ornament
And all my gold, these lepre folke shall haue
Whan I am dedde, to burie me in graue.

This roiall ring set with this Rubie redde
Whiche Troilus in dowrie to me sende
To him again I leaue it whan I am dedde
To make my carefull death vnto him kendé
Thus I conclude shortly and make an ende
My spirit I leue to Diane where she dwelles
To walke with her in wast wodes & welles.

O Diomede thou hast bothe broche & belte
Whiche Troilus gaue me in tokening
Of his true loue, & with that worde she swelt
And sone a leaper man toke of the ring
Than buried her withouten tarying
To Troilus forthwith the ring he bare
And of Creseide the death he can declare.

Whan he had heard her greate infirmite
Her legacie, and lamentacioun
And how she ended in foche pouerte
He swelt for wo and fell doune in a swoun
For sorowe his harte to brast was boun
Sighing full sadly saied I can no more
She was vntrue, and wo is me therfore.

Some saith he made a tõbe of marble grale
And wrote her name and superscripcioun
And laied it on her graue where as she laie
In golden letters, conteining this reasoun
Lo faire ladies, Creseide of Troie the toun
Somtime compted the floure of womanhed
Under this stone, late lepre lieth dedde.

Now worthy women in this balade short
Made for your worship and instruction
Of charite I monishe and exhorte
Minge nat your loue with false discepcion
Beare in your minde this fore conclusion
Of faire Creseide, as I haue saied before
Sith she is dedde, I speake of her no more.

¶ Thus endeth the pitefull and dolorous Testamente of faire Creseide: and here foloweth the Legende of good women.

¶ The Legende of good women.

A Thousande times I haue heard men tell
That there is ioie in heauen and pain in hell
And I accord it wele that it is so
But natheleſſe yet wot I wele also

That

The Prologue.

That there nis non dwelling in this countre
That either hath in heauen or in hell ibe
Ne maie of it none other waies witten
But as he heard saied, or found it written
For by assaie there maie no man it preue
But God forbede, but men should leue
Well more thing than thei han seen with ye
Men shall nat wenen euery thing a lie
But if himself it seeth, or els it doeth
For God wote thing is neuer the lesse soth
Though euery wight ne maie it not isee
Bernarde the Monke ne saugh all parde
Than mote we to bookes that we finde
(Through which ỹ old thinges ben in minde
And to the doctrine of these old wise)
Yeue credence, in euery skilfull wise
That tellen of these old approued stories
Of holines, of reignes, of victories
Of loue, of hate, and other sondrie thinges
Of whiche I maie not make rehearsinges
And if that old bookes were awaie
Ylorne were of all remembraunce the haie.
Well ought vs than, honouren and beleue
These bookes, there we han none other preue
And as for me, though that I can but lite
On bookes for to rede I me delite
And to hem yeue I faithe and full credence
And in mine harte haue hem in reuerence
So hartely, that there is game none
That fro my bookes maketh me to gone
But it be seldome on the holie daie
Saue certainly, whan ỹ the month of Maie
Is comen, and that I heare the foules sing
And that the floures ginnen for to spring
Farwell my booke, and my deuocion.
Now haue I than eke this condicion
That of all the floures in the Mede
Than loue I most these floures white & rede
Suche that men callen Daisies in our toun
To hem haue I so greate affection
As I, saied erst, whan comen is the Maie
That in my bedde there daweth me no daie
That I nam vp, and walking in the Mede
To seen this floure ayenst the Sunne sprede
Whan it vp riseth early by the morowe
That blisfull sight softeneth all my sorowe
So glad am I, whan that I haue presence
Of it, to doen it all reuerence
As she that is of all floures floure
Fulfilled of all vertue and honoure
And euery ilike faire, and freshe of hewe
And euer I loue it, and euer ilike newe
And euer shall, till that mine harte die
All sweare I not of this, I will not lie
There loued no wight hotter in his life
And whan that it is eue I renne blithe
As sone as euer the Sunne ginneth west
To seen this floure, how it will go to rest
For feare of night, so hateth she derknesse
Her chere is plainly spred in the brightnesse
Of the Sunne, for there it will vnclose
Alas that I ne had Englishe, rime, or prose
Sufficiaunt, this floure to praise aright
But helpeth ye, that han cõning and migh
Ye louers that can make of sentement
In this case ought ye be diligent
To forthren me somwhat in my labour
Whether ye been with the lefe or with ỹ flou
For well I wote, that ye han here beforne
Of making, ropen, and lad alwaie the corne
And I come after, glening here and there
And am full glad, if I maie finde an eare
Of any goodly worde that ye han left
And though it happen me to rehearsen eft
That ye han in your freshe songes saied
Forbeareth me, and beth not euill apaied
Sith that ye se, I doe it in the honour
Of loue: and eke in seruice of the flour
Whom that I serue, as I haue wit or might
She is the clerenesse and the very light
That in this derke world me wint and ledeth
The hart, with my sorowful brest you dredeth
And loueth so sore, that ye been verily
The maistres of my wit, and nothing I
My word, my workes, is knit so in your bõde
That as an harpe obeieth to the honde
And make it soune after his fingering
Right so mowe ye out of mine harte bring
Soch voice, right as you list, to laugh or plain
Be ye my guide, and Ladie souerain
As to mine yearthly God, to you I call
Bothe in this werke, and my sorowes all
But wherfore that I spake to yeue credence
To old stories, and doen hem reuerence
And that men mosten more thing bileue
That men maie seen at ye, or els preue
That shall I sein, whan that I se my time
I maie nat all atones speake in rime
My bulie ghost, that thurfteth alwaie newe
To seen this flour so yong, so freshe of hewe
Constrained me, with so gredie desire
That in mine harte I fele yet the fire
That made me to rise er it were daie
And this was now the first morowe of Maie
With dredfull harte, and glad deuotion
For to been at the resurrection
Of this floure, whan that it should vnclose
Again the Sunne, that rose as redde as rose
That in the best was of the beast that daie
That Ingenores doughter ladde awaie

And

And doune on knees anon right I me sette
And as I could, this freshe floure I grette
Kneling alwaie, till it vnclosed was
Upon the small, soft, swete gras
That was with floures swete embrouded al
Of soche swetnesse, and soche odour ouer all
That for to speake of gomme, herbe, or tre
Comparison maie none imaged be
For it surmounteth plainly all odoures
And of riche beaute of floures
Forgotten had the yearth his poore estate
Of winter, that him naked made and mate
And with his sworde of cloud so sore greued
Now hath the atempre sonne al that releued
That naked was, and clad it newe again
The small foules, of the season fain
That of the panter and the net been scaped
Upon the fouler, that hem made awhaped
In winter, and destroied had her brood
In his dispite him thought it did him good
To sing of him, and in her song dispise
The foule chorle, that for his couetise
Had hem betraied, with his Sophistrie
This was her song: The fouler we defie
And all his crafte, and some songen clere
Laies of Loue, that ioie it was to here
In worshipping and prailing of her make
And for the newe blisfull Somers sake
Upon the braunches full of blosmes soft
In her delite, thei tourned hem full oft
And songen, blissed be sainct Valentine
For on his daie I chese you to be mine
Withouten repenting, mine harte swete
And therwithall her beckes gonnen mete
Yelding honour, and humble obeisaunce
To loue, and didden her other obseruaunce
That longeth vnto loue, and vnto nature
Construewe that as you list, I doe no cure
And tho that had doen vnkindenesse
As doeth the Tidife, for newe fangelnesse
Besought mercie of her trespasing
And humbly song her repenting
And sworen on the blosmes to be true
So that her makes would vpon hem rue
And at the last maden her accorde
All found thei Daunger for the time a lorde
Yet Pite, through his strong gentill might
Forgaue, and made mercie passen right
Through Innocence, and ruled Curtelie
But I ne cleape it nat Innocence folie
Ne false pite, for vertue is the meane
As Etike saieth, in soche maner I meane
And thus these foule, voide of all malice
Accorded en to Loue, and lafte vice
Of hate, and song all of one accorde
Welcome Sommer, our gouernour and lorde
And zephirus, and Flora gentelly
Paus to the floures soft and tenderly
Her swote breth, and made hem for to sprede
As God and Goddesse of the flourie Mede
In whiche me thought I might daie by daie
Dwellen alwaie, the holy monthe of Maie
Withouten slepe, withouten meate or drinke
Adoune full softly I gan to sinke
And leaning on my elbowe and my side
The long daie I shope me for to abide
For nothing els, and I shall nat lie
But for to loke vpon the Deisie
That well by reason men it call maie
The Deisie, or els the ye of the daie
The emprise, and floure of floures all
I praie to God that faire mote she fall
And all that louen floures, for her sake
But nathelesse, ne wene nat that I make
In prailing of the floure again the lefe
No more than of the corne again the shefe
For as to me nis leuer none ne lother
I nam with holden yet with neuer nother
Ne I not who serueth lefe, ne who the floure
Well brouken thei her seruice or laboure
For this thing is all of an other toune
Of old storie, er soche thing was begonne
Whan that the sunne out the South gan west
And that this floure gan close, and gan to rest
For derknes of the night, the which she drede
Home to mine house full swiftly I me spede
To gone to rest, and earely for to rise
To seen this floure to sprede, as I deuise
And in a little herber that I haue
That benched was on turues freshe igraue
I bad men should me my couche make
For deintie of the newe Sommers sake
I bad hem strawen floures on my bedde
Whan I was laied, and had mine yen hedde
I fell a slepe, and slept an houre or two
Me met how I laie in the Medowe tho
To seen this floure, that I loue so and drede
And from a ferre came walking in the Mede
The God of Loue, and in his hande a Quene
And she was clad in roiall habite grene
A fret of golde she had next her heere
And vpon that a white croune she beare
With flourouns small, and I shall nat lie
For all the worlde right as a Deisie
Ycrouned is, with white leaues lite
So were the florouns of her croune white
For of o perle fine orientall
Her white croune was imaked all
For which the white croune, aboue the grene
Made her like a Deisie for to seme

Considred che her fret of gold aboue
I clothed was this mightie God of Loue
In silke embroided, full of grene greues
In whiche a fret of redde rose leues
The freshest lens the worlde was first begon
His gilt heere was crouned with a son
In stede of gold, for heuinesse and weight
Therwith me thouzt his face shone so bright
That well vnnethes might I him behold
And in his hand, me thouzt I sawe him hold
Two firie dartes, as the gledes rede
And Angelike his winges sawe I spzede
And all be that men sain, that blinde is he
Algate me thought that he might se
For sternely on me he gan behold
So that his loking doeth mine harte cold
And by the hande he held this noble Quene
Crouned with white, and clothed al in grene
So womanly, so benigne, and so meke
That in this worlde though ỹ men wold seke
Halfe her beaute should thei not finde
In creature that formed is by kinde
And therfore maie I sain as thinketh me
This long in praising of this Ladie fre

Hide Absolon thy gilt tresses clere
Hester laie thou thy meknesse all adoun
Hide Jonathas all thy frendly manere
Penelopee, and Marcia Catoun
Make of your wifehode no comparisoun
Hide your beauties, Isoude and Helein
My ladie cometh, that all this maie distain.

Thy faire bodie let it not appere
Lauine, and thou Lucrece of Rome toun
And Polirene, that boughten loue so dere
And Cleopatras, with all thy passioun
Hide your trouthe of loue, and your renoun
And thou Tisbe, that hast of loue soche pain
My Ladie cometh, that all this maie distain

Hero, Dido, Laodomia, all ifere
And Phillis, hanging for Demophoun
And Canace, espied by thy chere
Hipsiphile betraied with Jasoun
Maketh of your trouth neither bost ne soun
Nor Hipermistre, or Ariadne, ye twain
My ladie cometh, that all this maie distain.

This balade maie full well i songen be
As I haue saied erst, by my ladie fre
For certainly, all these mowe not suffice
To apperen with my Ladie in no wise
For as the Sunne doth the fire distain
So passeth all my Ladie souerain
That is so good, so faire, so debonaire
I praie to God that euer fall her faire
For nad comfort been of her presence
I had been dedde, withouten any defence
For drede of Loues wordes, and his chere
As whan time is, herafter ye shall here.

Behinde this God of Loue vpon the gren
I sawe coming of Ladies nine tene
In roiall habit, a full easie pace
And after hem came of women soche a trace
That sens that God Adam had made of erth
The third part of mankinde, or the ferth
Ne wende I nat by possibilite
Had euer in this wide worlde be
And true of loue, these women were echon
Now whether was ỹ a wonder thing or non
That right anon, as that thei gonne espie
This floure, whiche that I clepe the Daisie
Full sodainly thei stinten all at ones
And kneled doune, as it were for the nones
And songen with D voice, heale and honour
To trouth of womanhede, and to this flour
That beareth our alder prise in figuring
Her white croune beareth the witnessing
And with that worde, acompas enuiroun
Thei sitten hem full softly adoun
First sat the God of Loue, and sith his quene
With the white croune, clad all in grene
And sithen all the remnaunt by and by
As thei were of estate, full curteisly
Ne nat a worde was spoken in the place
The mountenance of a furlõg waie of space.

I kneling by this floure, in good entent
Abode to knowen what this people ment
As still as any stone, till at the last
This God of Loue, on me his yen cast
And said, who kneleth there: and I answerd
Unto his asking, whan that I it herde
And saied, sir it am I, and come him nere
And salued him (ỹ he) what doest thou here?
So nigh mine owne floure, so boldely
It were better worthy truely
A worme to nighen nere my flour than thou
And why sir (ỹ I) and it like you?
For thou (ỹ he) art therto nothing able
It is my relike, digne and delitable
And thou my foo, and all my folke werriest
And of mine old seruauntes thou missaiest
And hinderest hem, with thy translation
And lettest folke from her deuocion
To serue me, and holdest it folie
To serue Loue, thou maiest it nat denie
For in plain text, withouten nede of glose
Thou hast translated the Romaunt of ỹ rose
That is an heresie ayenst my lawe

And

And makest wise folke fro me withdrawe
And of Creseide, thou hast saide as the liste
That maketh men to women lesse triste
That ben as trewe as euer was any stele
Of thine answere auise the right wele
For though thou renied hast my laie
As other wretches haue done many a daie
By seint Uenus, that my mother is
If that thou liue, thou shalt repenten this
So cruelly, that it shal wel be sene
Tho spake this lady, clothed all in grene
And said, God right of your curtesie
Ye mote herken if he can replie
Ayenst al this, that ye haue to him meued
A God ne should nat be thus agreued
But of his deite he shal be stable
And therto gracious and merciable
And if ye nere a God, that knowen all
Than might it be, as I you tellen shall
This man to you maie falsely ben accused
That as by right, him ought ben excused
For in your courte is many a losengeour
And many a queinte totoler accusour
That tabouren in your eares many a soun
Right after her imaginacioun
To haue your daliaunce, and for enuy
These ben the causes, and I shal nat lie
Enuie is lauender of the court alwaie
For he ne parteth neither night ne daie
Out of the house of Cesar, thus saith Dant
Who so that goeth algate he wol nat want
And eke peraunter for this man is nice
He might done it, gessing no malice
But for he vseth thinges for to make
Him recketh nought of what mater he take
Or him was boden make thilke twey
Of some persone, and durst it nat withsey
Or him repenteth vtterly of this
He ne hath nat done so greuously amis
To translaten that olde clerkes writen
As though that he of malice would enditen
Dispite of loue, and had himselfe it wrought
This should a right wise lord haue in his thought
And nat be like tirauntes of Lombardie
That han no rewarde but at tirannie
For he that king or lorde is naturel
Him ought nat be tiraunt ne cruel
As is a fermour, to done the harme he can
He must thinke it is his liege man
And is his tresour, and his golde in cofer
This is the sentence of the Philosopher
I hinge to kepe his lieges in iustice
Withouten doute that is his office
Al wol he kepe his lordes in her degre
As it is right and skil, that thei be
Enhaunsed and honoured, and most dere
For thei ben halfe goddes in this world here
Yet mote he done both right to poore & riche
Al be that her estate be nat both iliche
And haue of poore folke compassion
For lo, the gentil kinde of the lion
For whan a flie offendeth him or biteth
He with his taile awaie the flie smiteth
Al easely, for of his gentrie
Him deineth nat to wreke him on a flie
As doeth a curre, or elsanother beest
In noble corage ought ben areest
And waien euery thing by equite
And euer haue regarde vnto his owne degre
For sir, it is no maistrie for a lorde
To dampne a man, without answere of word
And for a lorde, that is ful foule to vse
And it so be, he maie him nat excuse
But aske mercy with a dredeful harte
And profereth him, right in his bare shette
To ben right at your owne iugement
Than ought a God by short auisement
Considre his owne honour, and his trespace
For sith no cause of death lieth in this case
You ought to ben the lightlier merciable
Letteth your ire, & be he somwhat tretable
The man hath serued you of his conninges
And forthred well your law in his makinges
Al be it that he can nat wel endite
yet hath he made leude folke delite
To serue you, in preising of your name
He made the boke, ỹ hight the house of fame
And eke the death of Blaunche the Duchesse
And the Parliment of Foules, as I gesse
And al the loue of Palamon and Arcite
Of Thebes, though the storie is knowen lite
And many an himpne, for your holy daies
That highten balades, rondels, virelaies
And for to speke of other holinesse
He hath in prose translated Boece
And made the life also of saint Cecile
He made also, gone is a great while
Origenes vpon the Maudelaine
Him ought now to haue the lesse paine
He hath made many a ley, and many a thing
Now as ye be a God, and eke a king
I your Alceste, whilom quene of Trace
I aske you this man right of your grace
That ye him neuer hurte in al his liue
And he shal swearen to you, and that blius
He shal neuer more agilten in this wise
But shal maken as ye wol deuise
Of women trewe in louing al her life
Where so ye wol, of maiden or of wife
And forthren you, as muche as he misseide

The Prologue.

Or in the Rose, or els in Creseide
The God of Loue answerde her thus anon
Madame (q he) it is so longe agon
That I you knew, so charitable and trewe
That neuer yet, sens the worlde was newe
To me ne founde I better none than ye
If that I wol saue my degree
I may nor wol nat werne your requeste
Al lieth in you, doth with him as you leste
I al forgeue withouten lenger space
For who so geueth a yefte or doth a grace
Do it betime, his thanke shal be the more
And demeth ye what he shal do therfore
Go thanke now my lady here (q he)
I rose, and doun I set me on my knee
And said thus: Madame, the God aboue
For yelde you that the God of Loue
Haue maked me his wrathe to forgeue
And grace so longe for to liue
That I maie know sothely what ye be
That haue me holpen, and put in this degre
But trewly I wende, as in this caas
Nought haue a gilte, ne done to loue trespas
For why a trewe man withouten drede
Hath nat to parten with a theues dede
Ne a trewe louer ought me nat to blame
Though ỹ I spehe a falle louer some shame
Thei ought rather with me for to holde
For that I of Creseide wrote or tolde
Or of the Rose, what so mine author ment
Algate God wote it was mine entent
To forthren trouth in loue, and it cherice
And to ben ware fro falsenesse and fro vice
By whiche ensample, this was my mening
And she answerde, let be thine arguing
For loue ne wol not counterpleted be
In right ne wrong, and lerne that of me
Thou hast thy grace, & holde the right therto
Now will I saine what penaunce ỹ shalt do
For thy trespace, vnderstande it here
Thou shalt while ỹ thou liuest yere by yere
The moste partie of thy time spende
In making of a glorious legende
Of good women, maidens, and wiues
That weren trewe in louing all her liues
And tel of false men that hem betraien
That al her life ne do nat but assaien
How many women thei maie done a shame
For in your world that is now holde a game
And though the like nat a louer be
Spehe wel of loue, this penaunce yeue I the
And to the God of loue I shal so praie
That he shal charge his seruãts by any waie
To forthren the, and wel thy labour quite
Go now thy waie, this penaunce is but lite
And when this boke is made, yeue it ỹ quene
On my behalfe, at Eltham, or at Shene
The God of loue gan smile, and than he saide
Wost thou (q he) wher this be wife or maide
Or quene, or countesse, or of what degre
That hath so litell penaunce yeuen the
That hast deserued sore for to smarte
But pite renneth sone in gentle harte
That maist ỹ sene, she kitheth what she is
And I answerde, naie sir so haue I blis
No more, but that I se wel she is good
That is a trewe tale by mine hood
(q Loue) and thou knowest wel parde
If it be so that thou auise the
Hast thou nat in a boke in thy chefe
The great goodnesse of the quene Alceste
That turned was into a daisie
She that for her husbonde chese to die
And ete to gone to hell, rather than he
And Hercules rescued her parde
And brought her out of hel againe to blis
And I answerde againe, and said yes
Now know I her, and is this good Alceste
The daisie, and mine owne hartes reste
Now sele I wel the goodnesse of this wife
That both after her deth, and in her life
Her great bounte doubleth her renoun
Wel hath she quit me mine affectioun
That I haue to her floure the daisie
No wonder is though Ioue her stellifie
As telleth Agaton, for her great goodnesse
Her white corowne beareth of it witnesse
For also many vertues had she
As smal florouns in her corowne be
In remembraunce of her, and in honour
Cibilla made the daisie and the flour
Icrowned al with white, as men maie se
And Mars yaue to her a corown reed parde
In stede of Rubies set among the white
Therw̃ this quene wore reed for shame alite
Whan she was praised so in her presence
Than said Loue, a ful great negligence
Was it to the, that ilke time thou made
(Hide Absolon thy tresses) in balade
That thou forgette in thy songe to sette
Sith that thou art so greatly in her dette
And wost wel that kalender is she
To any woman, that wol louer be
For she taught all the crafte of trewe louing
And namely of wifehode the liuing
And all the bondes that she ought kepe
Thy litel witte was thilke time a slepe
But now I charge the vpon thy life
That in thy legende make of this wife
Whan thou hast other smale imade before

And

And fare now wel I charge thee no more
But er I go, thus muche I wol the tel
Ne shal no trewe louer come in hel
These other ladies sitting here a rowe
Ben in my balade, if thou const hem knowe
And in thy bokes, al thou shalte hem finde
Haue hem now in thy legende al in minde
I meane of hem that ben in thy knowing
For here ben twenty thousande mo sitting
Than thou knowest, good women al
And trewe of loue, for ought that maie befal
Make the metres of hem as the leste
I mote gone home, the sunne draweth weste
To paradis, with al this companie
And serue alwaie the fresh daiesie
At Cleopatras I wol that thou beginne
And so forthe, & my loue so shalt thou winne
For let se now what man that louer be
Wol done so stronge a paine for loue as she
I wote wel that thou maist nat al it rime
That suche louers did in her time
It were to longe to reden and to here
Suffiseth me thou make in this manere
That thou reherce of al her life the great
After these olde authours listen for to treate
For who so shal so many a storie tel
Sey shortely or he shal to longe dwell
And with that worde my bokes gan I take
And right thus on my legende gan I make.

¶ Thus endeth the Prologue.

¶ Here beginneth the legende of Cleopatras Quene of Egipte.

After the dethe of Ptholome the king
That all Egipt had in his gouerning
Reigned his Quene Cleopatras
Til on a time bifel there suche a caas
That out of Rome was sent a senatour
For to conqueren realmes and honour
Unto the toune of Rome, as was vsaunce
To haue the worlde at her obeisaunce
And sothe to saie, Antonius was his name
So fil it, as fortune him ought a shame
Whan he was fallen in prosperite
Rebel vnto the toune of Rome is he
And ouer al this, the suster of Cesare
He left her falsely, er that she was ware
And would algates han another wife
For whiche he toke with Rome, & Cesar strife
Nathelesse, for sothe this ilke Senatour
Was a ful worthy gentil werriour
And of his deth it was ful great domage
But loue had brouzt this man in such a rage
And him so narow bounden in his laas
And al for the loue of Cleopatras
That al the world he set at no value
Him thouzt there was nothing to him so due
As Cleopatras, for to loue and serue
Him thought that in armes for to sterue
In the defence of her, and of her right
This noble quene, eke loued so this knight
Through his deserte, and for his cheualrie
As certainlie, but if that bokes lie
He was of person, and of gentilnesse
And of discretion, and of hardinesse
Worthy to any wight that liuen maie
And she was faire, as is the rose in Maie
And for to maken shorte is the best
She woxe his wife, and had him as her lest
The wedding and the feste to deuise
To me that haue itake suche emprise
And so many a storie for to make
It were to longe, lest that I should slake
Of thing that beareth more effecte & charge
For men maie ouer lade a shippe or barge
And for thy, to effecte than wol I skippe
And al the remnaunt, I wol let it slippe
Octauian, that woode was of this dede
Shope him an hooste on Antony to lede
Al vtterly, for his distruction
With stoute Romaines, cruel as Lion
To ship thei went, and thus I let hem saile
Antonius was ware, and wol nat faile
To meten with these Romaines, if he maie
Toke eke his rede, and both vpon a daie
His wife and he, and al his host forth went
To ship anone, no lenger thei ne stent
And in the see it happed hem to mete
Up goeth the trumpe, & for to shoute & shete
And painen hem to set on with the sunne
With grisly sowne out goth the great gonne
And hertely thei hurtlen in al at ones
And fro the top, doune cometh ẏ great stones
In goth the grapenel so ful of crokes
Among the ropes ran the shering hokes
In with the polaxe preaseth he and he
Behinde the maste, beginneth he to flie
And out againe, and driueth him ouer borde
He sticketh him vpon his speares orde
He rent the saile with hokes like a sithe
He bringeth the cuppe, & biddeth hem be blith
He poureth peesen vpon the hatches slider
With pottes ful of lime, thei gone to gider

And thus the long daie in fight thei spende
Til at the last, as euery thing hath ende
Antony is shent, and put him to the flight
And al his folke to go, that best go might
Fleeth eke the quene, with al her purple saile
For strokes, whiche ẏ went as thicke as haile
No wonder was, he might it nat endure
And whan that Antony sawe that auenture
Alas (q̃ he) the daie that I was borne
My worship in this daie thus haue I lorne
And for dispaire, out of his witte he starte
And rose him selfe anon through out ẏ harte
Er that he ferther went out of the place
His wife, that coulde of Cesar haue ne grace
To Egipt is fled, for drede and for distresse
But herkeneth ye that speken of kindenesse
Ye men that falsely swearen many an othe
That ye wol die, if that your loue be wrothe
Here maie ye sene of women such a trouth
This woful Cleopatre had made suche routh
That there nis tonge none that maie it tel
But on the morowe, she wol no lenger dwel
But made her subtel werkmen make a shrine
Of al the rubies and the stones fine
In al Egipt, that she coulde espie
And put ful the shrine of spicerie
And lette the corse enbaume, & forth she fette
This deed corse, and in the shrine it shette
And next the shrine a pit than doth she graue
And al the serpentes that she might haue
She put hem in that graue, & thus she seide
Now loue, to whō my sorowful hart obeide
So ferforthly, that fro that blisful hour
That I you swore, to ben al frely your
I meane you, Antonius my knight
That neuer waking in the daie or night
Ye nere out of mine hartes remembraunce
For wele or wo, for carole, or for daunce
And in my selfe, this couenaunt made I tho
That right suche as ye felten wele or wo
As ferforth as it in my power laie
Unreprouable vnto my wifehode aie
The same would I felen, life or deathe
And thilke couenaūt, while me lasteth brethe
I wol fulfil, and that shal wel be sene
Was neuer vnto her loue a trewer quene
And with ẏ word, naked with ful good hart
Among the serpentes in the pitte she start
And there she chese to haue her buriyng
Anone the neders gonne her for to sting
And she her death receiueth with good chere
For loue of Antony that was her so dere
And this is storial, sothe it is no fable
Now er I finde a man thus trewe and stable
And wol for loue his death so frely take
I praie God let our heedes neuer ake.

¶ Here endeth the legende of Cleopatras, and here foloweth the legende of Tisbe of Babilone.

AT Babiloine whilom fil it thus
The whiche toun the quene Simiramus
Let dichen al about, and walles make
Full hie, of harde tiles wel ibake
There were dwelling in this noble toun
Two lordes, which ẏ were of great renoun
And woneden so nigh vpon a grene
That there nas but a stone wal hem bitwene
As oft in great tounes is the wonne
And sothe to saine, that one man had a sonne
Of al that londe, one of the lustiest
That other had a doughter, the fairest
That estward in ẏ world was tho dwelling
The name of eueriche, gan to other spring
By women that were neighbours aboute
For in that countre yet withouten doute
Maidens ben ikepte for ielousie
Ful straite, lest thei didden some folie
This yonge man was cleped Piramus
Tisbe hight the maide (Naso saith thus)
And thus by reporte, was her name ishoue
That as thei wore in age, so wore her loue
And certaine, as by reason of her age
Ther might haue ben betwixt hem mariage
But that her fathers nolde it nat assent
And bothe in loue ilike sore thei brent
That none of al her frendes might it lette
But priuely somtime yet thei mette
By sleight, and spaken some of her desire
As wrie the glede, and hotter is the fire
Forbid a loue, and it is ten times so wode
This wal, which ẏ bitwixt hem both stode
Was clouen a two, right fro the top adoun
Of olde time, of his foundacioun
But yet this clifte was so narow and lite
It was nat sene, dere inough a mitte
But what is that, that loue can not espie
Ye louers two, if that I shal nat lie
Ye founden first this litle narowe clifte
And with a sounde, as softe as any shrifte
Thei let her wordes through the clifte pace
And tolden, while that thei stodē in the place
Al her complaint of loue, and al her wo
At euery time whan thei durst so
On that one side of the wal stode he

And

And on that other side stode Tisbe
The swete soune of other to receiue
And thus her wardeins would thei disceiue
And euery daie this wal thei would threte
And wishe to God, that it were doun ibete
Thus wold thei saine, alas thou wicked wal
Through thine enuie, thou vs lettest al
Why nilt thou cleaue, or fallen al a two
Or at the lest, but thou wouldest so
Yet wouldest thou but ones let vs mete
Or ones that we might kissen swete
Than were we cured of our cares colde
But natheless, yet be we to the holde
In as muche as thou suffrest for to gone
Our wordes throuz thy lime & eke thy stone
Yet ought we with the ben wel apaide
And whan these idel wordes weren saide
The colde wal thei wolden kisse of stone
And take her leaue, & forth thei wolden gone
And this was gladly in the euentide
Or wonder erly, lest men it espide
And long time thei wrought in this maniere
Til on a daie, whan Phebus gan to clere
Aurora with the stremes of her hete
Had dried vp the dewe of herbes wete
Unto this cliffe, as it was wonte to be
Come Piramus, and after come Tisbe
And plighten trouth, fully in her faie
That ilke same night to steale awaie
And to begile her wardeins euerichone
And forth out of the Cite for to gone
And for the feldes ben so brode and wide
For to mete in o place at o tide
Thei set markes, her metinges should be
There king Ninus was grauen, vnder a tre
For olde painems, that idolles heried
Useden tho in feldes to ben buried
And faste by his graue was a wel
And shortely of this tale for to tel
This couenaunt was affirmed wonder fast
And longe hem thought that the sonne last
That it nere gone vnder the see adoun
This Tisbe hath so great affectioun
And so great liking Piramus to se
That whan she saw her time might be
At night she stale awaie ful priuely
With her face iwimpled subtelly
For al her frendes (for to saue her trouthe)
She hath forsake alas, and that is routhe
That euer woman would be so trewe
To trusten man, but she the bet him knewe
And to the tre she goeth a ful good pace
For loue made her so hardy in this case
And by the welle, adoun she gan her dresse
Alas, than cometh a wilde Lionesse
Out of the wode, withouten more areest
With blody mouthe, of strangling of a beest
To drinken of the wel there as she sat
And whan that Tisbe had espied that
She rist her vp, with a ful drery harte
And in a caue, with dredful fote she starte
For by the moone she sawe it wel withall
And as she ran, her wimple let she fall
And toke none hede, so sore she was a whaped
And eke so glad that she was escaped
And thus she sat, and lurketh wonder still
Whan that this Lionesse hath dronke her till
About the well gan she for to winde
And right anon the wimple gan she finde
And with her blody mouth it al to rente
Whan this was done, no lenger she ne stente
But to the wodde her way thã hath she nome
And at the last this Piramus is come
But al to longe (alas) at home was he
The moone shone, men might wel ise
And in his waie, as that he come ful fast
His eyen to the grounde adoun he cast
And in the sonde, as he beheld adoun
He saw the steppes brode of a Lioun
And in his hart he sodainly agrose
And pale he wexte, therwith his hart arose
And nere he came, & founde the wimple torne
Alas (q he) the daie that I was borne
This o night wol both vs louers slee
How should I aken mercy of Tisbee
Whan I am he that haue you slaine, alas
My bidding hath you slaine in this caas
Alas, to bidde a woman gone by night
In place there as perill fallen might
And I so false we, alas I ne had be
Here in this place, a furlonge waie er ye
Now what Lioun that is in this forest
My body mote he rente, or what best
That wilde is, gnawen mote he mine harte
And with that worde, he to the wimple starte
And kisse it ofte, and wepte on it ful sore
And said wimple alas, there nis no more
But thou shalt fele as wel the blode of me
As thou hast felte the bleding of Tisbe
And w that worde, he smote him to the harte
The blode out of the wounde as brode starte
As water, whan the conduite broken is
Now Tisbe, whiche that wiste nat this
But sitting in her drede, she thought thus
Yf it so fall that my Piramus
Be comen hither, and may me nat ifinde
He maie me holden faise, and eke vnkinde
And out she cometh, & after him gan espien
Both e with her hart, and with her eien
And thought, I wol him tellen of my drede

Both of the lioneſſe and of my dede
And at the laſt her loue than hath ſhe founde
Beating with his heeles on the grounde
Al blody, and therwithal a bache ſhe ſtarte
And like the wawes, quappe gan her harte
And pale as boxe ſhe woxe, and in a throwe
Auiſed her, and gan hem wel to knowe
That it was Piramus her harte dere
Who could write whiche a deedly chere
Hath Tiſbe now, and how her heere ſhe rent
And how ſhe gan her ſelfe to turment
And how ſhe lieth & ſwouneth on the ground
And how ſhe wept of teeres ful his wounde
How medleth ſhe his blod, w̄ her complaint
How with her blod, her ſelfen gan ſhe paint
How clippeth ſhe the reed coxſe, alas
How doth this wofful Tiſbe in this caas
How kiſſeth ſhe his froſty mouth ſo colde
Who hath don this? & who hath ben ſo bolde?
To ſleen my leſe, o ſpeke Piramus
I am thy Tiſbe, that the calleth thus
And therwithal ſhe lifteth vp his heed
This wofull man that was nat fully deed
Whan that he herde the name of Tiſbe crien
On her he caſt his heuy deedly eyen
And doun againe, and yeldeth vp the goſt
Tiſbe riſt vp, without noiſe or boſt
And ſaw her wimple and his empty ſheth
And eke his ſwerde, ẏ̄ him hath don to deth
Than ſpake ſhe thus, thy wofull hande (q̄ ſhe)
Is ſtronge inough in ſuche a werke to me
For loue ſhal yeue me ſtrength and hardineſſe
To make my wounde large inough I geſſe
I wol the folowen deed, and I wol be
Felawe, and cauſe eke of thy deth (q̄ ſhe)
And though that nothing ſaue the deth only
Might the fro me departe trewly
Thou ſhalt no more departe now fro me
Than fro the death, for I wol go with the
And now ye wretched ielouſe fathers our
We that weren whilom children your
We praien you, withouten more enuie
That in o graue we moten lie
Sens loue hath brought vs this pitous ende
And right wiſe God, to euer louer ſende
That loueth trewly more proſperite
Than euer had Piramus and Tiſbe
And let no gentil woman her aſſure
To putten her in ſuche an auenture
But God forbid but a woman can
Ben as true and louing as a man
And for my parte, I ſhal anon it kith
And with ẏ̄ word, his ſwerd ſhe toke ſwith
That warme was of her loues blood, & hote
And to the hart ſhe her ſelfen ſmote

And thus are Tiſbe and Piramus ago
Of trewe men I finde but fewe mo
In al my bokes, ſaue this Piramus
And therfore haue I ſpoken of him thus
For it is deintie to vs men to finde
A man that can in loue be trewe and kinde
Here maie ye ſene, what louer ſo he be
A woman dare, and can as wel as he.

Here endeth the legende of Tiſbe of Babilone, and here folowеth the legende of Dido quene of Cartage.

Lorie & honour Virgile Mantuan
Be to thy name, and I ſhal as I can
Folowe thy lanterne, as thou goeſt bifore
How Eneas to Dido was forſworne
In thine Eneide, and Naſo wol I take
The tenour and the great effectes make
Whan Troie brought was to diſtruction
By Grekes ſleight, and namely by Sinon
Faining the horſe offred vnto Minerue
Through which ẏ̄ many a Troian muſt ſterue
And Hector had after his death apered
And fire ſo wode, it might nat ben ſtered
In al the noble tour of Ilion
That of the cite was the cheſe dongeon
And al the countre was ſo lowe ibrought
And Priamus the king fordone and nought
And Eneas was charged by Venus
To flien a waie, he toke Aſcanius
That was his ſon, in his right hande & fledde
And on his backe he bare, and with him ledde
His olde father, cleped Anchiſes
And by the waie his wife Creuſa he leeſ
And mokel ſorow had he in his minde
Er that he could his felawſhip finde
But at the laſt, whan he had hem founde
He made him redy, in a certaine ſtounde
And to the ſee ful faſt he gan him hie
And ſaileth forth, with al his companie
Toward Italie, as wolde deſtenee
But of his auentures in the ſee
Nis nat to purpoſe for to ſpeke of here
For it accordeth nat to my matere
But as I ſaid, of him and of Dido
Shal be my tale, til that I haue do
So longe he ſailed in the ſalte ſee
Til in Libie vnneth arriued he
So was he with the tempeſt al to ſhake

And

And whan that he the hauen had itake
He had a knight was called Achatees
And him of all his felowship he chees
To gone with him, the countrey for tespie
He toke with him nomore companie
But forthe thei gon, and left his shippes ride
His feere and he, withouten any guide
So long he walketh in this wildernesse
Till at the last he met an hunteresse
A bowe in honde, and arowes shē
Her clothes cutted were vnto the knee
But she was yet the fairest creature
That euer was ifourmed by nature
And Eneas and Achates she grette
And thus she to hem spake, whā she hem met
Sawe ye (q she) as ye han walked wide
Any of my sustren walke you beside
With any wilde Bore, or other beast
That thei haue hunted to in this forest
Iclucked vp, with arowes in her caas
Naie sothly Ladie (q this Eneas)
But by thy beautie, as it thinketh me
Thou mightest neuer yearthly woman be
But Phebus suster art thou, as I gesse
And if so be that thou be a goddesse
Haue mercie on our labour and our wo
I nam no Goddesse sothly (q she) tho
For maidens walken in this countre here
With arowes and with bow, in this manere
This is the realme of Libie, there ye been
Of whiche that Dido ladie is and Quene
And shortly tolde all the occasion
Why Dido came into that region
Of whiche as now me liketh nat to rime
It nedeth nat, it nere but losse of time
For this is all and some, it was Venus
His owne mother, that spake with him thus
And to Cartage she bade he should him dight
And vanished anon out of his sight
I could folowe worde for worde Vergile
But it would lasten all to long while
This noble Quene, that cleped was Dido
That whilom was the wife of Sitheo
That fairer was than the bright sonne
This noble toune of Cartage hath begonne
In whiche she reigneth in so greate honour
That she was holde of all Quenes flour
Of gentillesse, of fredome, and of beaute
That well was him, that might ones se
Of kinges and Lordes so desired
That all the worlde her beaute had ifired
She stode so well in euery wightes grace
Whan Eneas was come vnto the place
Vnto the maister temple of all the toun
There Dido was in her deuocioun
Full priuely his waie than hath he nome
Whan he was in the large temple come
I can not saine, if that it be possible
But Venus had him maked inuisible
Thus saieth the booke, withouten any lees
And whan this Eneas and Achates
Hadden in this temple been ouer all
Than founde thei depainted on a wall
How Troie and all the lande distroied was
Alas that I was borne (q Eneas)
Through the world our shame is hid so wide
Now it is painted vpon euery side
We that weren in prosperite
Been now disclaundred, and in soche degre
No lenger for to liuen I ne hope
And with that worde, he brast out for to wepe
So tenderly, that routh it was to seen
This freshe ladie, of the citee Quene
Stode in the temple, in her estate roiall
So richely, and eke so faire withall
So yong, so lustie, with her iyen glade
That if that God, that heauen & yearth made
Would haue a loue, for beaute and goodnesse
And womenhede, trouth, and semelinesse
Whom should he louen, but this ladie swete?
There nis no woman to him halfe so mete
Fortune, that hath the world in gouernaūce
Hath sodainly brought in so newe a chaunce
That neuer was there yet so frened a caas
For all the companie of Eneas
Whiche that we wende haue lorne in the see
Iriued is nought ferre fro that citee
For whiche the greatest of his lordes, some
By auenture been to the citee come
Vnto that same temple for to seke
The Quene, and of her socour her beseke
Soch renome was ther sprōg of her goodnes
And whan thei had tolde all her distresse
And all her tempest and all her heard caas
Vnto the Quene appered Eneas
And openly beknewe that it was he
Who had ioie than, but his meine
That hadden found her lorde, her gouernour
The quene saw thei did him soche honour
And had heard oft of Eneas, er tho
And in her harte had routhe and wo
That euer soche a noble man as he
Shall been disherited in soche degre
And sawe the man, that he was like a knight
And sufficiaunt of persone and of might
And like to been a very gentilman
And well his wordes he beset can
And had a noble visage for the nones
And formed well of brawne and of bones
And after Venus had soche fairenesse

That no man might be halfe so faire I gesse
And well a lorde him semed for to be
And for he was a straunger, somwhat she
Liked him the bet, as God doe bote
To some folke, often newe thing is sote
In on her harte hath pite of his wo
And with pite, Loue came also
And thus for pite and for gentilnesse
Refreshed must he been of his distresse
She saied: certes, that she sorie was
That he hath had soche perill and soche caas
And in her frendly speache, in this manere
She to him spake, and saied as ye maie here.
Be ye nat Venus sonne and Anchises
In good faithe, all the worshipe and encrees
That I maie goodlie doen you, ye shall haue
Your shippes and your meine shall I saue
And many a gentill worde she spake him to
And commaunded her messangers to go
The same daie withouten any faile
His shippes for to seke, and hem vitaile
Full many a beast she to the shippes sent
And with the wine she gan hem to present
And to her roiall paleis she her spedde
And Eneas alwaie with her she ledde
What nedeth you the feastes to discrive
He neuer better at ease was in his liue
Full was the feast of deinties and richesse
Of instrumentes, of song, and of gladnesse
And many an amorous loking and deuise
This Eneas is come to Paradise
Out of the swolowe of hell, and thus in ioie
Remembreth him of his estate in Troie
To daunsing chambres full of paramentes
Of riche beddes, and of pauementes
This Eneas is ledde after the meate
And with the quene whan that he had seate
And spices parted, and the wine agon
Unto his chamber was he lad anon
To take his ease, and for to haue his rest
With all his folke, to doen what so hem lest
There nas courser well ibridled none
Ne stede for the Iusting well to gone
Ne large paulfrey, easie for the nones
Ne iowell fret full of riche stones
Ne sackes full of gold, of large wight
Ne Rubie none that shineth by night
Ne gentill hauten faukon heronere
Ne hounde for Harte, wilde bore, or Bere
Ne cuppe of gold, with floreins newe ibette
That in the londe of Libie maie been gette
That Dido ne hath Eneas it isent
And all is paied, what that he hath spent
Thus cā this honorable quene her gestes cal
As she that can in fredome passen all

Eneas sothely ebe, without lees
Hath sent to his shippe by Achates
After his sonne, and after riche thinges
Both ceptre, clothes, broches, and eke ringes
Some for to weare, and some to present
To her, that all these noble thinges him sent
And bad his sonne how that he should make
The presenting, and to the quene it take
Repaired is this Achates again
And Eneas full blisfull is and fain
To seen his yong sonne Ascanius
For to him it was reported thus
That Cupido, that is the God of Loue
At praier of his mother hie aboue
Had the liknesse of the childe itake
This noble Quene enamoured for to make
On Eneas, but of that scripture
Be as be maie, I make of it no cure
But soth is this, ỹ quen hath made soch chere
Unto this childe, that wonder was to here
And of the present that his father sent
She thanked him oft in good entent.
Thus is this quene in pleasaunce and ioie
With all these newe lustie folke of Troie
And of the deedes hath she more enquired
Of Eneas, and all the storie lered
Of Troie, and all the long daie thei twaie
Entendeden for to speake and for to plaie
Of whiche there gan to breden soche a fire
That selie Dido hath now soche delire
With Eneas her newe gest to deale
That she lost her hewe and eke her heale
Now to the effect, now to the fruite of all
Why I haue told this storie, and tellen shall
Thus I beginne, it fell vpon a night
Whan that the Mone vpreised had her light
This noble Quene vnto her rest went
She sighed sore, and gon her self tourment
She waiketh, waloweth, & made many braied
As doen these louers, as I haue heard saied
And at the laste, vnto her suster Anne
She made her mone, & right thus spake she thā
Now dere suster mine, what maie it be
That me agasteth in my dreame (ỹ she)
This ilke newe Troian is so in my thought
For that me thinketh he is so well iwrought
And eke so likely to been a man
And therwith so mikell good he can
That all my loue and life lieth in his cure
Haue ye nat heard him tell his auenture
Now certes Anne, if that ye rede me
I woll fain to him iwedded be
This is the effect, what should I more seine
In him lieth all, to doe me liue or deine
Her suster Anne, as she that coud her good

Saied

Said as her thought, & somdele it withstode
But hereof was so long a sermoning
It were to long to make rehearsing
But finally, it maie not be withstonde
Loue woll loue, for no wight woll it wonde
The dawning vp rist, out of the see
This amorous Quene chargeth her meine
The nettes dresse, and speres brode and kene
An hunting woll this lustie freshe Quene
So pricketh her this newe iolie wo
To horse is all her lustie folke igo
Unto the court the houndes been ibrought
And vp on courser swift as any thought
Her yong knightes heuen all about
And of her women eke an huge rout
Upon a thicke palfraie, paper white
With sadell redde, enbrouded with delite
Of golde the barres, vp enbossed high
Sate Dido, all in golde and perrey wrigh
And she is faire, as is the bright morowe
That healeth sicke folkes of nightes sorowe
Upon a courser, startling as the fire
Men might tourne him with a little wire
But Eneas, like Phebus to deuise
So was he freshe araied in his wise
The fomie bridell, with the bitte of gold
Gouerneth he right as himself hath would
And forthe this noble Quene, this ladie ride
On hunting, with this Troian by her side
The herde of Hartes, founden is anon
With hey gobet, pricke thou, let gon, let gon
Why nill the Lion comen or the Beare
That I might him ones meten w this speare
Thus sain this yong folke, and vp thei kill
The wilde Hartes, and haue hem at her will
Emong all this, to romblen gan the heuen
The Thonder rored with a grisly steuen
Doune come the rain, with haile & slet so fast
With heauens fire, that made so sore agast
This noble Quene, and also her meine
That eche of hem was glad awaie to flie
And shortly fro the tempest her to saue
She fled her self, into a little caue
And with her went this Eneas also
I not with hem if there went any mo
The auctour maketh of it no mencion
And here began the depe affection
Bitwixt hem two this was the first morowe
Of her gladnesse, and ginning of her sorowe
For there hath Eneas ikneled so
And told her all his hurte and all his wo
And sworne so depe to her to be true
For well or wo, and chaunge for no newe
And as a false louer, so well can plain
That selie Dido rewed on his pain
And toke him for husbond, & became his wife
For euermore, while that hem last life
And after this, whan that the tempest stente
With mirth out as thei came, home thei wet
The wicked fame vp rose, and that anon
How Eneas hath with the Quene igon
Into the caue, and demed as hem list
And whan ẏ king (that Yarbas hight) it wist
As he that had her loued euer his life
And wowed her to haue to his wife
Soche sorow as he hath maked, & soche chere
It is a routhe and pite for to here
But as in loue, aldaie it happeth so
That one shall laughen at an others wo
Now laugheth Eneas, and is in ioie
And more richesse, than euer was in Troie
O selie woman, full of innocence
Full of pite, of truthe, and continence
What maked you to men to trusten so?
Haue ye soche routhe vpon her fained wo
And haue soche old ensamples you beforne
Se ye nat all how thei been forsworne
Where se ye one, that he ne hath lafte his lefe
Or been vnkinde, or doen her some mischefe
Or pilled her, or hosted of his dede
Ye maie as well it seen, as ye maie rede
Take hede now of this greate gentilman
This Troian, that so well her please can
That faineth him so true and obeising
So gentill, and so priuie of his doing
And can so well doen all his obeisaunce
To her, at feastes and at daunce
And whan she goeth to temple, & home again
And fasten till he hath his ladie sein
And bearen in his deuises for her sake
Not I nat what, and songes would he make
Justen, and doen of armes many thinges
Sende her letters, tokens, broches, & ringes
Now herkeneth how he shal his lady serue
There as he was in perill for to sterue
For hunger and for mischefe in the see
And desolate, and fledde fro his countree
And all his folke with tempest all to driuen
She hath her body and eke her realme yeuen
Into his honde, there she might haue been
Of other lande than of Cartage a Quene
And liued i ioy inough, what would ye more
This Eneas, that hath thus depe iswore
Is werie of his craft within a throwe
The hote earnest is all ouer blowe
And priuely he doeth his shippes dight
And shapeth him to steale awaie by night
This Dido hath suspection of this
And thought well that it was all amis
For in his bedde he lieth a night and siketh

She

She asketh him anon, what him misliketh
My dere harte, whiche that I loue moste
Certes (q̃ he) this night my fathers ghoste
Hath in my slepe, me so sore tourmented
And eke Marcurie his message hath presẽted
That nedes to the conquest of Itaile
My destenie is sone for to saile
For which me thinketh, brosten is mine hart
Therwith his false teares out thei start
And taketh her within his armes two.
Is that in earnest (q̃ she) woll ye so
Haue ye nat sworne, to wife me to take
Alas, what woman woll ye of me make?
I am a gentill woman, and a Quene
Ye woll not fro your wife thus foule flene
That I was borne alas, what shall I do?
To tellen in short, this noble Quene Dido
She seketh halowes, and doeth Sacrifice
She kneleth, crieth, that routh is to deuise
Coniureth him, and profereth him to be
His thrall, his seruaunt, in the best degre
She falleth him to fote, and sowuneth there
Discheuile with her bright gilt heere
And saieth, haue mercy, let me with you ride
These lordes, whiche that wonnen me beside
Woll me distroien onely for your sake
And ye woll me now to wife take
As ye haue sworne, thã woll I yeue you leue
To slaen me w̃ your swerde, now sone at eue
For than yet shall I dien as your wife
I am with childe, and yeue my childe his life
Mercie lorde, haue pite in your thought
But al this thing auaileth her right nought
And as a traitour forthe gan to saile
Toward the large countre of Itaile
And thus hath he laft Dido in wo and pine
And wedded there a ladie hight Rauine
A clothe he laft, and eke his sworde standing
Whan he fro Dido stale in her sleping
Right at her beddes hedde, so gan he hie
Whan that he stale awaie to his nauie
Which cloth, whan selie Dido gan awake
She hath it kiste full oft for his sake
And said, o swete cloth, while Iupiter it lest
Take my soule, vnbinde me of this vnrest
I haue fulfilled of fortune all the course
And thus alas, withouten his socourse
Twentie time iswouned hath she than
And whan that she vnto her suster Anne
Complained had, of which I maie not write
So greate routh I haue it for to endite
And bad her norice and her sustren gon
To fetchen fire, and other thinges anon
And saied that she would Sacrifie
And whan she might her time well aspie
Upon the fire of Sacrifice she starte
And with his sworde she rofe her to the harte
But as mine auctour saith, yet this she seide
Or she was hurte, beforne or she deide
She wrote a letter anon, and thus began
Right so (q̃ she) as the white Swan
Ayenst his death beginneth for to sing
Right so to you I make my complaining
Not that I trowe to getten you again
For well I wote it is al in vain
Sens that the goddes been cõtrarious to me
But sin my name is lost through you (q̃ she)
I maie well lese a worde on you or letter
All be it, I shall be neuer the better
For thilke wind that blewe your ship awaie
The same winde hath blowe awaie your faie
But who so wol al this letter haue in minde
Rede Ouide, and in him he shall it finde.

¶ Here endeth the Legende of Dido quene of Cartage: And here foloweth the legende of Hipsiphile and Medea.

Thou roote of false louers, Duke Iason
Thou sleer, deuourer, and confusion
Of gentill women, gentil creatures
Thou madest thy reclaiming and thy lures
To Ladies of thy scathliche aparaunce
And of thy wordes farsed with pleasaunce
And of thy fained trouth, and thy manere
With thine obeisaunce and humble chere
And with thine counterfeited pain and wo
There other falsen one, thou falsed two
O oft swore thou, that thou wouldest die
For loue, whan thou ne feltest maladie
Saue foule delite, whiche thou callest loue
If that I liue, thy name shall be shoue
In Englishe, that thy deceipt shall be knowe
Haue at thee Iason, now thin honor is blow
But certes, it is bothe routh and wo
That Loue with false louers werketh so
For thei shal haue well better loue and chere
Than he that hath bought loue full dere
Or had in armes many a bloodie boxe
For euer as tender a capon eateth the Foxe
Though he be fals, & hath the foule betraied
As shall the goodman that therefore paied
Although he haue to the capon skill & right
The false Foxe woll haue his part at night
On Iason this ensample is well iseen

By

By Hipsiphile, and Medea the Quene
In Thessalie, as Ouide telleth vs
There was a knight, that hight Pelleus
That had a brother, whiche that hight Eson
And whan for age he might vnnethes gon
He yaue to Pelleus the gouerning
Of all his reigne, and made him lorde a king
Of whiche Eson, this Jason getten was
That in his time, in all that lande there nas
Nat soche a famous knight of gentillesse
Of fredome, of strength, and of lustinesse
After his fathers death he bate him so
That there nas none that list been his foe
But did him all honour and compaignie
Of whiche this Pelleus hath greate enuie
Imagining, that Jason might be
Enhaunsed so, and put in soche degre
With loue of lordes of his regioun
That from his reigne, he maie be put adoun
And in his wit a night compassed he
How Jason might best destroied be
Withouten sclaunder of his compasment
And at the last he toke auisement
That to sende him into some ferre countre
There as this Jason maie destroied be
This was his wit, all made he to Jason
Greate chere of loke, and of affection
For drede lest his lordes it espide
So till it, as fame renneth wide
There was soche tiding ouer all, & soche loos
That in an Jle, that called was Colcos
Beyonde Troie Eastward in the see
That there was a Ram, that men might se
That had a flees of golde, that shone so brizt
That no where was there soche an other sizt
But it was kept alwaie with a Dragoun
And many other maruailes vp and doun
And with two Bulles, maked all of Bras
That spitten fire, and mochе thing ther was
But this was eke the tale nathelees
That who so would winnen thilke flees
He must bothe, or he it winnen might
With the Bulles and the Dragon fight
And king Otes, lorde was of that Jle
This Pelleus bethought vpon this while
That he his neuewe Jason would exhort
To sailen to that londe, him to disport
And saied, neuewe if it might be
That soche worship might fall thee
That thou this famous treasure might win
And bring it my region within
It were to me greate pleasaunce and honour
Than were I holde to quite thy labour
And all thy costes I woll my self make
And chose what folke thou wolt with thee take
Let se now, darste thou taken this voiage.
Jason was young, and lustie of corage
And vndertoke to doen this ilke empzise
Anon Argus his shippes gan deuise
With Jason went the strong Hercules
And many an other, that he with him ches
But who so asketh, who is with him gon
Let him rede Argonauticon
For he woll tell a tale long inough
Philoctetes anon thei saile vp drough
Whan the winde was good, and gan him hie
Out of his countre, called Thessalie
So long thei sailed in the salt see
Till in the Jle of Lemnon ariued he
All be this nat rehearsed of Guido
Yet saieth Ouide in his Epistles so
And of this Jle ladie was and Quene
The faire yong Hipsiphile the shene
That whilom Thoas doughter was the king
Hipsiphile was gon in her plaiyng
And roming on the cleuis by the see
Vnder a banke anone espied she
Where laie the shippe, that Jason gan ariue
Of her goodnesse adoune she sendeth bliue
To weten, if that any straunge wight
With tempest thider were iblowe anight
To doen him socour, as was her vsaunce
To furtheren euery wight, a don pleasaunce
Of very bountie, and of curtesie
This messanger adoune him gan to hie
And founde Jason and Hercules also
That in a cogge to londe were rigo
Hem to refreshen, and to take the aire
The morning attempre was and faire
And in her waie this messanger hem mette
Full conningly these lordes two he grette
And did his message, asking hem anon
If that thei wer broken, or ought wo begon
Or had nede of lodesmen, or vitaile
For succour thei should nothing faile
For it was vtterly the Quenes will
Jason answerde meekely and still
My ladie (q he) thanke I hartely
Of her goodnesse, vs nedeth truely
Nothing as now, but that we werie be
And come for to plaie out of the see
Till that the winde be better in our waie
This ladie rometh by the cliffe to plaie
With her meine, endlong the stronde
And findeth this Jason, & this other stonde
Inspeaking of this thing, as I you told
This Hercules and Jason gan behold
How that the quene it was, & faire her grete
Anon right as thei with this ladie mete
And she toke hede, and knewe by her manere

By

By her araie, by wordes, and by chere
That it were gentill men of greate degre
And to the castle with her leadeth she
These straūge folke, & doeth hem great honor
And asketh hem of trauaile and of labor
That thei haue suffred in the salt see
So that within a daie, two or three
She knewe by the folk that in his shippes be
That it was Jason full of renomee
And Hercules, that had the greate loos
That soughten the auentures of Colcos
And did hem honour, more than before
And with hem dealed euer longer the more
For thei been worthy folke withouten lees
And namely moste she spake with Hercules
To him her harte bare, he should be
Sadde, wise, and true, of wordes auisee
Withouten any other affection
Of loue, or any other imagination

This Hercules hath this Jason praised
That to the Sunne he hath it vp reised
That halfe so true a man there nas of loue
Under the cope of heauen, that is aboue
And he was wise, hardie, secrete, and riche
Of these .iii. pointes, ther nas non him liche
Of fredome passed he, and lustie hedde
All tho that liuen, or been dedde
Thereto so greate a gentill man was he
And of Thessalie likely king to be
There nas no lacke, but that he was agast
To loue, and for to speake shamefast
Him had leauer himself to murder and die
Than that men should a louer him espie
As would God that I had ireue
My blood and flesche, so that I might liue
With the nones, ỹ he had aught wher a wife
For his estate, for soche a lustie life
She shoulden lede, with this lustie knight
And all this was compassed on the night
Betwixe him Jason, and this Hercules
Of these two here was a shreude lees
To come to house, vpon an innocent
For to be dote this Quene was her entent
And Jason is as coie as is a maide
He loketh pitously, but naught he saied
But frely yaue he to her counsailers
Yeftes greate, and to her officers
As would God that I leaser had and time
By processe, all his wrong for to rime
But in this house, if any false louer be
Right as himself now doeth, right so did he
With fayning, and with euery subtell dede
Ye get no more of me, but ye woll rede
Thoriginall, that telleth all the caas
The sothe is this, that Jason wedded was
Unto this quene, and toke of her substaunce
What so him list, vnto his purueiaunce
And vpon her begate children two
And drough his saile, and sawe her neuer mo
A letter sent she him certain
Whiche were to long to writen and to sain
And him reproueth of his greate vntrouth
And praieth him on her to haue some routh
And on his children two, she saied him this
That thei be like of all thing iwis
To Jason, saue thei couth nat begile
And praied God, or it were long while
That she that had his harte ireft her fro
Must finden him vntrue also
And that she muste bothe her children spill
And all tho that suffreth him his will
And true to Jason was she all her life
And euer kept her chaste, as for his wife
Ne neuer had she ioie at her harte
But died for his loue of sorowes smarte.

To Colcos come is this duke Jason
That is of loue deuourer and dragon
As Satire appeteth forme alwaie
And from forme to forme it passen maie
Or as a welle that were botomles
Right so can Jason haue no pees
For to desiren through his appetite
To doen with gentill women his delite
This is his luste, and his felicite
Jason is comed forthe to the cite
That whilom cleped was Jasonicos
That was the maister toune of all Colcos
And hath itolde the cause of his coming
Unto Otes, of that countrey king
Praiyng him that he must doen his assaie
To gette the flese of golde, if that he maie
Of whiche the king assenteth to his booen
And doeth him honour, as it is to dooen
So ferforth, that his doughter and his heire
Medea, whiche that was so wise and faire
That fairer sawe there neuer man with yie
He made her doen to Jason companie
At meate, and sitte by him in the hall

Now was Jason a semely man withall
And like a Lorde, and had a greate renoun
And of his loke as roiall as a Lioun
And Godlie of his speache, and familiere
And coud of loue al the craft and art plenere
Withouten boke, with euerich obseruaunce
And as fortune her ought a foule mischaūce
She wore enamored vpon this man
Jason (quod she) for ought I se or can
As of this thing, the whiche ye been about
Ye and your self ye put in moche doubt
For who so woll this auenture atcheue

He maie nat wele asterten, as I leue
Withouten death, but I his helpe be
But natheles it is my will (q̃ she)
To forthren you, so that ye shall nat die
But turnen sounde home to your Thessalie
My right lady (q̃ this Jason) tho
That ye haue of my death or my wo
Any regarde, and doen me this honour
I wot wel that my might, ne my labour
May nat deserue it my liues daie
God thanke you, there I ne can ne maie
Your man am I, and lowely you beseche
To ben my helpe, withouten more speche
But certes for my death shal I not spare
Tho gan this Medea to him declare
The peryl of this case, fro point to point
Of his batayle, and in what desioynt
He mote stonde, of whiche no creature
Saue onely she, ne might his lyfe assure
And shortly, right to the poynt for to go
They ben accorded fully betwyxe hem two
That Jason shal her wedde, as true knight
And terme yset to come soone at night
Unto her chambre, and make there his othe
Upon the goddes, that he for lefe or lothe
Ne shulde her neuer falsen nyght ne daye
To ben her husbonde whyle he lyue maye
As she that from his deth him saued here
And herupon at night they mette yfere
And doth his othe, & gothe with her to bedde
And on the morowe vpwarde he him spedde
For she hath taught hi how he shal nat fayle
The flees to wynne, & stinten his bataile
And saued hym his life, and his honour
And gate him a name, as a conquerour
Right through the sleight of her enchantmēt
Now hath Jason the flese, and home is went
With Medea, & treasours full great wonne
But vnwyste of her father she is gonne
To Thessalye, with duke Jason her lefe
That afterwarde hath brouzt her to michefe
For as a traytour he is from her go
And with her lefte yonge children two
And falsely hath betrayed her, alas
And euer in loue a chefe traytour he was
And wedded yet the thirde wyfe anon
That was the doughter of kyng Creon
This is the meede of louyng and guerdon
That Medea receiued of duke Jason
Right for her trouth, and for her kyndnesse
That loued him better than her selfe I gesse
And lefte her father, and her herytage
And of Jason this is the vassalage
That in his dayes nas neuer non yfounde
So false a louer, goyng on the grounde
And therefore in her letter thus she sayd
First when she of his falsnesse him vmbrayd
Why lyked me thy yelowe heer to see
More than the boundes of mynhoneste?
Why lyked me thy youth and thy fayrnesse
And of thy tonge, the infynite gracyousnesse
O haddest thou in thy conquest deed ybe
Ful mikel vntrouth had there dyed with the
Wel can Ouide her letter in verse endyte
Whiche were as nowe to longe for to write.

Here endeth the Legende of Hypsiphile and Medea: And herefoloweth the legende fo Lucrece of Rome.

Nowe mote I sain therilyng of kynges
Of Rome, for her horrible doynges
Of the laste kynge Tarquinius
As saith Ouid, and Titus Lyuius
But for that cause tel I nat this storye
But for to praysen, and drawen in memorye
The very wyfe, the very Lucresse
That for her wifehode, and her stedfastnesse
Nat onely that these panymes her cōmende
But that cleped is in our legende
The great Austyn, that hath compassioun
Of this Lucrece that starfe in Rome toun
And in what wise, I wol but shortly treat
And of this thing I touch but the great
Whan Ardea besiege was aboute
With Romayns, that ful sterne were & stout
Ful longe lay the siege and litel wroughten
So ẏ they wer halfe ydel, as hem thoughten
And in his play Tarquinius the yonge
Gan for to iape, for he was lyght of tonge
And sayd, that it was an ydle lyfe
No man dyd there more than his wife
And let vs speke of wiues, that is best
Praise euerie man his own as him lest
And with our speach let vs ease our herte
A knight (that hyght Colatin) vp sterte
And sayd thus, nay sir it is no nede
To trowen on the worde, but on the dede
I haue a wife (q̃ he) that as I trowe
Is holden good of al that euer her knowe
Go we to Rome to nyght, and we shul se
Tarquinius answerde, that lyketh me
To Rome they be comen, and fast hem dighte
To Colatyns house, and downe they light
Tarquinius, and eke this Colatine
The husbonde knewe the efters wel & fyne

And ful priuely into the house theigone
Nor at the gate, porter was there none
And at the chambre dore they abyde
This noble wife sate by her beddes syde
Discheueled, for no malyce she ne thought
And soft wol saith Liui that she wrought
To kepen her from ſiouthe and ydelnesse
And bad her seruauntes done her besinesse
And asketh hem, what tidinges heren ye?
How saith men of the siege, howe shal it be?
God wolde the walles were fallen a downe
Myn husbond is to longe out of this towne
For whiche drede doth me sore to smerte
Right as a sworde, it styngeth to min hert
Whan I thinke on this or of that place
God saue my lorde, I pray him for his grace
And therwithal so tenderly she gan wepe
And of her werke she toke no more kepe
But mekely she let her eien fal
And thilke semblant sate her wel withal
And eke her teares ful of heuinesse
Embelessed her wifely chastnesse
Her countenaunce is to herte digne
For thei accordeden indede and signe
And withthat worde her husbonde Colatin
Or she of him was ware, came stertling in
And said, drede the nat for I am here
And she anone vp rose, with blisful chere
And kyssed him, as of wiues is the wonne
Tarquinius, this proude kinges sonne
Conceiued hath her beautie and her chere
Her yelowe heere, her bountie, & her manere
Her hewe, her wordes, ẏ she hath complained
And by no craft her beautie was nat fained
And caught to this lady soche desire
That in his hert he brent as any fire
So wodely, that his witte was all forgotten
For wel thought he she shulde nat be goten
And aye the more he was in dispraire
The more coueiteth, and thought her faire
His blinde luste was al his coueiting
On morowe, whan the birde be gan to syng
Unto the siege he cometh ful priuely
And by him selfe he walketh soberly
The ymage of her recording alway newe
Th⁹ lay her heere, & thus fresh was her hew
Thus sate, thus span, this was her chere
Thus faire she was, & this was her manere
Al this conceite his herte hath newe y take
And as the see, with tempest al to shake
That afterwhan the storme is al ago
Yet woll the water quappe a daie or two
Right so, though that her forme were absent
The pleasaunce of her forme was present
But nathelenesse nat pleasaunce, but delite,
Or an vnrightful talent with dispite
For maugre her, she shal my lemman be.
Hap helpeth hardy man alway (ꝙ he)
What ende that I make, it shal be so
And gyrte him with his sworde, & gan to go
And he forthe right, tyl to Rome he come
And al alone his way that he hath nome
Unto the house of Colatin ful right
Down was ẏ some, & day hath lost his lyght
And in he come, vnto a priuie halke
And in the night ful thefely gan he stalke
Whan euery wight was to his rest brought
Ne no wight had of treson soche a thought
Whether by windowe, or by other gin
With swerde ydrawe, shortly he cometh in
There as she lay, this noble wife Lucrece
And as she woke, her bedde she felt presse
What best is that (ꝙ she) that wayeth thus
I am the kinges sonne Tarquinius
(ꝙ he) but & thou crie, or any noise make
Or if thou any creature a wake
By thilke god, that formed man of lyue
This swerde throught thyn hert shal I ryue
And therwithal, vnto her throte he sterte
And set the swerde al sharpe on her herte
No word she speak, she hath no might therto
What shal she saine, her witte is al ago
Right as a wolfe that faineth alambe alone
To whom shal she complaine or make mone
What, shal she fight with an hardie knight
Wel wotte men a woman hath no might
What shal she crie, or howe shal she astert?
That hath her by the throte w̄ swede at hert
She asketh grace, and said al that she can
No wolt thou nat (ꝙ this cruel man)
As wisely Jupiter my soule saue
I shal in thy stable slee thy knaue
And lay him in thy bedde and loude crie
That I the fynde in soche auoutrie
And thus thou shalt be deed and also leese
Thy name, for thou shalt nat chese
This Romains wiues loueden so her name
At thilke tyme and dreden so the shame
That what for fere of slaunder, & dred of deth
She loste both at ones wit and breth
And in aswough she lay, & woxe so deed
Men mighten smite of her arme or heed
She feleth nothing, neither foule ne faire
Tarquinius, that arte a kinges heyre
And shuldest, as by linage and by right
Done as a lorde, and a very knight
Why hast thou done dispite to chiualrye?
Why hast thou done thy lady vilanie?
Alas, of the this was a vilainous dede
But nowe to the purpose, in the story I rede
Whan

When he was gonne, & this mischaũce is fal
This lady sent after her frendes al
Father, mother, and husbonde, al yfere
And dischevеled with her heere clere
In habyt soche as women vsed tho
Unto the buryeng of her frendes go
She sate in hal, with a sorowful syght
Her frendes asken what her aylen myght
And who was deed, and she sate aye wepyng
Ne word for shame ne may she forth out bring
Ne vpon hem she durst nat be hold
But at the laste of Tarquiny she hem tolde
This rufful case, and al this thyng horrible
The wo to tell, were impossible
That she and al her frendes make at ones
Al had folkes hertes ben of stones
It might haue mated hem vpon her rewe
Her hert was so wifely and so trewe
She said, that for her gilte ne for her blame
Her husbõde shulde nat haue the foule name
That wolde she nat suffren by no waye
And they answerde al vnto her saye
That they forgaue it her, for it was right
It was no gylte, it lay nat in her myght
And sayden her ensamples many one
But al for naught, for thus she said anone
Be as be may (quod she) of forgiuyng
I will nat haue no forgifte for nothing
But priuely she cought forth a knife
And therwithal she rafte her selfe her life
And as she fel adowne she caste her loke
And of her clothes, yet hede she toke
For in her fallyng, yet she had a care
Leste that her fete, or soche thinges lay bare
So wel she loued clennesse, and eke trouthe
Of her had al the towne of Rome routhe
And Brutus hath by her chaste blode swore
That Tarquin shulde y banished be therfore
And al his kinne, and let the people cal
And openly the tale he tolde hem al
And openly let cary her on a bere
Through al ỹ towne, that men may se & here
The horrible dede of her oppressioun
Ne neuer was there kyng in Rome toun
Sens thylke day, and she was holden there
A saynt, and euer her day yhalowed dere
As in her lawe: and thus endeth Lucresse
The noble wyfe, Tytus beareth witnesse
I tel it for she was of loue so trewe
Ne in her wil she chaunged for no newe
And in her stable herte, sadde and kinde
That in these women men may al day finde
There as they cast her hert, there it dwelleth
For wel I wote, that Christ him selfe telleth
That in Israel, as wide as is the londe
That so great faith in al the londe he ne fõde
As in a woman, and this is no lie
And as for men, loke ye soche tyrannie
Thei doen al daie, assay hem who so lifte
The trewest is ful brothel for to trifte.

Here endeth the Legende
of Lucrece of Roome.

Here foloweth the Legende
of Ariadne of Athenes.

IUdge infernal Minos, of
Crete kyng
Now cometh thi lot, thou
comest on the ryng
Nat for thy sake onely
writen is this storye
But for to cleape ayen
vnto memorie
Of Theseus the great vntrouthe of loue
For whiche the goddes of heuen aboue
Ben wroth, & wrath haue take for thy synne
Be reed for shame, nowe I thy lyfe beginne
Minos that was the mighty king of Crete
That had an hundred cities strong and grete
To schole hath sent his sonne Androgeus
To Athenes, of the whiche it happed thus
That he was slayne, lerning philosyphie
Right in that cyte, nat but for enuie
The great Minos, of the whiche I spеke
His sonnes deth is come for to wreke
Alcathoe he besieged harde and longe
But natheles the walles be so stronge
And Nisus, that was kyng of that cite
So chiualrous, that litel dredeth he
Of Minos or his hoste, take he no cure
Tyl on a daie befil an auenture
That Nisus doughter stode vpon the wal
And of the siege, sawe the maner al
So happed it, that at scarmishing,
She caste her hert vpon Minos the king
For his beautie, and his chiualrye
So sore, that she wende for to die
And shortly of this processe for to pace
She made Minos winnen thilke place
So that the cite was al at his wyl
To sauen whom him liste, or els spill
But wickedly he quit her kyndnesse
And let her drenche in sorowe and distresse
Nere that the goddes had of her pite
But that tale were to longe as nowe for me
Athenes was this king Minos also
As Alcathoe, and other townes mo
And this ỹ elde, that Minos hath so driuen

Hem of Athenes, that thei mote him yeuen
Fro yere to yere, her owne childzen dere
Foz to be slaine, as ye shal after here
This Minos hath a monster, a wicked best
That was so cruel, that without areest
Whã ỳ a man was brought in to his presẽce
He wolde him eate, there helpeth no defence
And euery thirde yere withoten doute
Thei casten lotte, as it came aboute
On riche and pooze, he muste his sonne take
And of his childe he must presente make
To Minos, to saue him oz to spill
Oz let his beest deuour him at his will
And this hath Minos don right in dispite
To wreke his sonne was set al his delyte
And make hem of Athenes hys thral
Fro yere to yere, while he liuen shal
And whom he saileth whã this toun is won
This wicked custome is so longe ygon
Tyl of Athenes king Egeus
Mote senden his owne sonne Theseus
Sens that the lotte is fallen him vpon
To ben deuoured, foz grace is there non
And forth is ladde this woful yonge knight
Unto ỳ countre of king Minos ful of might
And in a prison fettred faste is he
Tyl the time he shulde yfreten be
Wel maist thou wepe, o woful Theseus
That art a kinges sonne, and damned thus
Me thinketh this, that thou art depe yholde
To whom that saued the fro cares colde
And nowe yf any woman helpe the
Wel oughtest thou her seruaunt foz to be
And ben her trewe louer yere by yere
But nowe to come aien to my matere
The toure, there this Teseus is throwe
Downe in the bottom derke, & wonder lowe
Was ioyning to the wal of a foreine
Longing vnto the doughtren tweine
Of Minos, that in her chambres grete
Dwelten aboue the maister strete
Of the towne, in ioy and in solas
Not I nat howe, it happed percaas
As Theseus complained him by night
The kinges doughter, that Ariadne hight
And eke her suster Phedra, herden al
His complainte, as thei stode on the wall
And loked vpon the bright moone
Hem liste nat to go to bedde so soone
And of his wo thei had compassion
A kinges sonne to be in soche prison
And ben deuoured, thought hem great pite
Than Ariadne spake to her suster fre
And said: Phedra leue suster dere
This woful lordes sonne mai we nat here
Howe pitously he complaineth his kinne
And eke his poore estate that he is inne
And giltieste, certes nowe it is routhe
And yf ye wol assent by my trouthe
He shal ben holpen howe so that we do
Phedra answerde, ywis me is as wo
Foz him, as euer I was foz any man
And to his helpe the best rede I can
Is, that we done the gailer priuely
To come and speke with vs hastely
And done this woful man with him to come
Foz if he maie this monster ouercome
Than were he quite, there is none other bote
Let vs wel taste him at his herte roote
That if so be, that he a weapon haue
Where that he his life dare kepe oz saue
Fighten with this fende, and him defende
Foz in the prison, there as he shal discende
Ye wote wel, that the beest is in a place
That is not derke, & hath roume & eke space
To welde an axe, oz swerde, staffe, oz knife
So that me thinketh he shulde saue his life
If that he be a man, he shal do so
And we shal make him balles eke also
Of were and towe, that whã he gapeth fast
Into the beestes throte he shal hem cast
To sleke his honger, and encomber his tethe
And right anon, whan that Theseus sethe
The beest acheked, he shal on him leepe
To sleen him, oz they comen moze to heepe
This weapen shal the gailer, oz that tyde
Ful priuely within the prison hyde
And foz the house is crencled to and fro
And hath so queint waies foz to go
Foz it is shapen as the maze is wrought
Therto haue I a remedy in my thought
That by a clewe of twyne, as he hath gon
The same way he may returne anon
Folowing alway the threde, as he hath come
And whan this beest is ouercome
Than may he flien away out of this stede
And eke the gailer may he with him lede
And him auaunce at home in his countre
Sens that so great a lordes sonne is he
This is my rede, if that ye dare it take
What shulde I lenger sermon of it make
The gailer cometh, and with him Theseus
Whan these thinges ben accorded thus
Downe sate Theseus vpon his kne
The right lady of my life (quod he)
I sorowfull man, ỳ damned to the dethe
Fro you, whiles that me lasteth breethe
I wol nat twinne, after this auenture
But in your seruice, thus I wol endure
That as a wretche vnknow, I wol you serue

Foz

For euernore, tyl that min herte sterue
Forsake I wol at home min heritage
And as I said, ben of your courte a page
If that ye vouchesafe that in this place
Ye graunte me to haue soche a grace
That I may haue nat but my meate & drinke
And for my sustinaunce yet wol I swinke
Right as you lyst, that Minos ne no wight
Sens that he saw me neuer with eyen sight
Ne no man elis shal me espye
So slily, and so wel I shal me gye
And me so wel disfigure, and so lowe (we
That in this world there shal no man me kno
To haue my lyfe, and to haue presence
Of you, that done to me this excellence
And to my father shal I sende here
This worthy man, that is your gayler
And him so guerdon, that he shal wel be
One of the greatest men of my countre
And if I durst sayne, my lady bright
I am a kinges sonne and eke a knight
As wolde god, if that it might be
Ye weren in my countrey al thre
And I with you, to beare you companye
Than shuld ye sene if that I therof lye
And if that I profer you in lowe manere
To ben your page, and seruen you right here
But I you serue as lowly in that place
I pray to Mars to yeue me soche grace
That shames deth on my there mote fall
And deth and pouerte to md frendes all
And that my spryte by night mote go
After my death, and walke to and fro
That I mote of traitour haue a name
For whiche my spryt mote go, to do me shame
And if I clayme euer other degre
But ye vouchsafe to yeue it me
As I haue laid, of shames deth I dey
And mercy lady, I can naught els sey
A semely knight was this Theseus to se
And yonge, but of twenty yere and thre
But who so had sene his countenaunce
He wold haue wept, for routh of his penūce
For which this Ariadne in this manere
Answerde to his profre and to his chere
A kynges sonne, and eke a knight (q she)
To ben my seruaunt in so lowe degree
God shilde it, for the shame of women al
And lene me neuer soche a case befal
And sende you grace, and sleight of hert also
You to defende, & knightly to sleen your foe
And lene here after I may you finde
To me, and to my suster here so bynde
That I ne repent nat to yeue you lyfe
Yet were it better I were your wife
Sithe ye ben as gentil borne as I
And haue a realme nat but faste by
Than that I suffred your gētillesse to sterue
Or that I let you as a page serue
It is no profite, as vnto your kinrede
But what is that, ỹ man wol nat do for dred
And to my suster syth that it is so
That she mote gone with me, if that I go
Or els suffre death as wel as I
That ye vnto your sonne as trewly
Done her be wedded, at youte home coming
This is the fynal ende of al this thing
Ye swere it here, vpon all ỹ may be swore
Ye lady myn (q he) or els to tore
Wote I be ẅ the Minotaure or to morowe
And haueth here of min hert blod to borowe
If that ye wol, if I had knife or speare
I wolde it letten out, and theron sweare
For than at erste, I wot ye wouldē me leue
By Mars, that is chiefe of my beleue
So that I might lyuen, and nat faile
To morowe for to taken my bataile
I nolde neuer fro this place flye
Tyl that ye shulde the very profe se
For now, if that the soth I shall you say
I haue loued you ful many a daie
Though ye ne wist nat, in my countre
And aldermoste desyred you to se
Of any erthly liuing creature
Vpon my trouthe I sweare, and you assure
This seuen yere I haue your seruaunt be
Nowe haue I you, and also haue ye me
My dere hert, of Athenes duchesse
This lady smileth at his stedfastnesse
And at his hertely wordes, and at his chere
And to her suster sayd in this manere
And sothely suster myn (q she)
Nowe be we duchesses both I and ye
And sikerde to the regals of Athenes
And both hereafter likely to be quenes
And saued fro his death a kinges sonne
As euer of gentil women is the wonne
To saue a gentil man, enforth her might
In honest cause, and namely in his right
We thinketh no wight ought vs herof blame
Ne bearen vs therfore an yuel name
And shortly of this mater for to make
This Theseus of her hath leaue ytake
And euery point was performed in dede
As ye haue in this couenaunt herde me rede
His wepen, his clewe, his thig ỹ I haue said
Was by the gailer in the house ylaid
There as the Mynotaure hath his dwellyng
Right fast by the dore, at his entring
And Theseus is lad vnto his dethe

And forth vnto this Minotaure he gethe
And by the teaching of this Adriane
He ouercame this beest, and was his bane
And out he cometh by the clewe againe
Ful priuely, whan he this beest hath slaine
And the gailer gotten hath a barge
And of his wiues treasure gan it charge
And toke his wife, and eke her suster fre
And by the gailer, and with hem al thre
Is stole away out of the londe by night
And to the countre of Enupie him dight
There as he had a frende of his knowing
There feesten thei, there daunsen thei & sing
And in his armes hath this Adriane
That of the beest hath kept him fro his bane
And get him there a noble barge anone
And of is countrey folke a ful great wone
And taketh his leaue, & homwarde saileth he
And in an yle, amidde the wilde see
There as there dwelte creature none
Saue wilde beestes, and that ful many one
He made his shippe a londe for to sette
And in that yle, halfe a daie he lette
And sayd, þ on the londe he must him reste
His mariners haue done right as him leste
And for to tel shortly in this case
Whan Ariadne his wife a slepe was
For that her suster fayred was than she
He taketh her in his honde, & forth goth he
To shyppe, and as a traitour stale away
While that this Ariadne a slepe lay
And to his countrey warde he saileth bliue
Atwenty dyuel way, the winde him driue
And found his father drenched in the see
We lyste no more to speke of him parde
These false louers, poison be her bane
But I wol turne againe to Adriane
That is with slepe for werinesse ytake
Ful sorowfully her herte may awake
Alas, for the myne herte hath pite
Right in the dawning awaketh she
And gropeth in the bed, & fond right nought
Alas (q she) that euer I was wrought
I am betrayed, and her heere to rente
And to the stronde barefote fast she wente
And cryed: Theleus myn hert swete
Where be ye, that I may nat with you mete?
And might thus with beestes ben yslaine
The halowe rockes answerde her againe
No man she sawe, and yet shone the moone
And hye vpon a rocke she went soone
And sawe his barge, sailing in the see
Colde wore her hert, and right thus said she
Weker than ye, finde I the beestes wylde
Hath he nat synne, that he her thus begylde
She cried, o turne againe for routhe & sinne
Thy barge hath nat al his meine inne
Her kercheke on a pole stycked she
Ascaunce he shulde it wele yse
And him remembre that she was behinde
And turne againe, & on the stronde her finde
But all for naught, his way he is gone
And downe she fel a swowne on astone
And vp she rise, and kyssed in all her care
The steppes of his fete, there he hath fare
And to her bed right thus she speketh tho
Thou bed (q she) that hast receiued two
Thou shalt answere of two, and not of one
Where is the greater parte, away gone
Alas, wher shal I wretched wight become
For though so be that bote none here come
Home to my countrey dare I nat for drede
I can my selfe in this case nat rede
What should I tel more here complaining
It is so long: it were an heauy thing
In her epistle, Naso telleth all
But shortly to the ende tel I shall
The goddes haue her holpen for pyte
And in the sygne of Taurus men may se
The stones of her crowne shyne clere
I will no more speke of this matere
But thus this false louer can begile
His trew loue, the diuel quit him his while.

There endeth the legende of Ariadne
And here foloweth the legende
of Philomene.

You yeuer of the formes,
that hast wrought
The fayre world, and bare
it in thy thought
Eternally, er thou thy
werke began
Why madest thou vnto
the slaunder of man
Or all be that it was not thy doyng
As for that fende, to make soche a thing
Why suffredest thou that Tereus was borne
That is in loue so false and so forsworne
That fro this worlde vp to the first heuen
Corrumpeth, whā that folke his name neuē
And as to me, so grisly was his dede
That whan that I this foule storie rede
Myne iyen weren foule, and sore also
Yet lasteth the venyme of so longe ago
That enfecteth him, that wolde beholde
The storie of Tereus, of which I tolde
Of Traco was he lorde, and kyn to Marte
The cruel god that stante with blody darte

And

And wedded had he with blisfull chere
Kyng Pandionis faire doughter dere
That hight Progne, floure of her countre
Though Juno lite not at the feast be
Ne Himeneus, that God of Wedding is
But at the feast ready been iwis
The furis three, with all her mortall bronde
The Oule all night aboue the balkes wonde
That Prophete is of wo, and of mischaunce
This reuell, full of song and full of daunce
Laste a fourtenight, or little lasse
But shortlie of this storie for to passe
(For I am wearie of hym for to tell)
Fiue yere his wife and he togither dwell
Till on a daie she gan so sore long
To seen her suster, that she sawe not long
That for desire she nist what to saie
But to her housbonde gan she for to praie
For Goddes loue, that she mote ones gone
Her suster for to seen, and come ayen anone
Or els but she mote to her wende
She praied him ỹ he would after her sende
And this was daie by daie all her praiere
With al humblesse of wifehode, worde & chere
This Tereus let make his shippes yare
And into Grece hymselfe is forthe ifare
Unto his father in lawe gan he praie
To vouchesafe, that for a moneth or twaie
That Philomene his wiues suster might
On Progne his wife, but ones haue a sight
And she shall come to you again anon
My selfe with her, I will bothe come and gon
And as my hartes life I will her kepe
This olde Pandion, this kyng gan wepe
For tendernesse of harte, for to leue
His doughter gon, and for to yeue her leue
Of all this worlde he loued nothyng so
But at the laste leaue hath she to go
For Philomene with salte teares eke
Gan of her father grace to beseke
To seen her suster, that her longeth so
And hym enbraceth, with her armes two
And there also yong and faire was she
That when that Tereus sawe her beaute
And of arraie, that there was none her liche
And yet of beaute was she to so riche
He cast his fierie harte vpon her so
That he woll haue her, how so that it go
And with his wiles kneled, and so praied
Till at the last Pandion thus saied
Now sonne (quod he) that art to me so dere
I thee betake my yong doughter dere
That beareth the keie of all myne hartes life
And grete well my doughter, and thy wife
And yeue her leaue somtyme for to pleie
That she maie seen me ones or I deie
And sothly he hath made hym riche feast
And to his folke, the moste and eke the least
That with him came, a yaue him yeftes great
And him conueieth thrugh the maister street
Of Athenes, and to the sea hym brought
And tourneth home, no malice he ne thought
The Ores pulleth forthe the vessell fast
And in to Trace arriueth at the last
And vp in to a forest he her led
And to a caue priuely hym sped
And in this darke caue, if her left
Or list nought, he bad her for to rest
Of whiche her harte agrose, and saied thus
Where is my suster, brother Tereus?
And there withall she wept tenderlie
And quoke for feare, pale and pituouslie
Right as the lãbe, that of the Wolfe is bitten
Or as the Culuer, that of the Egle is smitten
And is out of his clawes forthe escaped
Yet it is a ferde, and a waped
Left it be hent eftsones: so fate she
But vtterlie it maie none other be
By force hath this traitour doen a deede
That he hath reft her of her maidenhede
Maugre her head, by strength & by his might
Lo here a deede of men, and that a right
She crieth suster with full loude steuen
And father dere helpe me God in heauen
All helpeth not, and yet this falle thefe
Hath doen his Ladie yet a more mischefe
For feare, lest she should his shame crie
And doen hym openlie a villanie
And with his sweard her tong of kerfe he
And in a Castell made her for to be
Full priuely in prisone euermore
And kept her to his vsage and to his store
So that she ne might neuer more astarte
O selie Philomene, wo is in thine harte
Huge been thy sorowes, and wonder smarte
God wreke thee, and sende thee thy bone
Now is tyme I make an ende sone
This Tereus is to his wife icome
And in his armes hath his wife inome
And pitously he wept, and shoke his hedde
And swore her, that he found her suster dedde
For whiche this selie Progne hath sothe wo
That nigh her sorowfull harte brake a two
And thus in teares let I Progne dwell
And of her suster forthe I woll you tel
This wofull Ladie ilearned had in youth
So that she worken and enbrauden couth
And weauen in stole the rade bore
And it of women hath be woued yore
And sothly for to saine, she hath her till

Of meate and drinke, of clothing at her will
And couthe eke rede weil inough and endite
But with a penne she could not write
But letters can she weaue, to and fro
So that by the yere was all a go
She had wouen in a stames large
How she was brought fro Athens in a barge
And in a caue how that she was brought
And all the thyng that Tereus wrought
She waue it wel, and wrote the storie aboue
How she was serued for her lusters loue
And to a man a ring she yaue anon
And praied hym by signes for to gon
Unto the quene, and bearen her that clothe
And by signe swore many an othe
She should him yeue what she getten might
This man anon vnto the quene him dight
And toke it her, and all the maner tolde
And whē the Progne hath this thing behold
No worde she spake, for sorowe eke for rage
But fained her to gon on pilgrimage
To Baccus temple, and in a little stounde
Her dombe custer sittyng hath she founde
Weping in the castell her self alone
Alas the wo, constraint, and the mone
That Progne vpon her dombe custer maketh
In armes eueriche of hem other taketh
And thus I let hem in her sorowe dwell
The remenaunt is no charge to tell
For this is all and some, thus was she serued
That neuer agilt, ne deserued
Unto this cruell man, that she of wiste
Ye maie beware of men if that you liste
For all be that he woll not for shame
Doen as Tereus, to lese his name
Ne serue you as a murtherer or a knaue
Full little while shull ye trewe hym haue
That woll I sain, al wer he now my brother
But it so be that he maie haue an other.

God for his grace fro suche one kepe vs
Thus these women praien, that it here
Now to the effecte tourne I of my matere
Destroied is of Troie the Citee
This Demophon came sailyng in the see
Toward Athenes, to his paleis large
With him came many a ship, & many a barge
Full of folke, of whiche full many one
Is wounded sore, and sicke, and wo begone
And thei haue at the siege long ilaine
Behinde him came a winde, and eke a raine
That shoke so sore, his saile might not stonde
Hym were leuer then all the worlde alonde
So hunteth hym the tempest to and fro
So darke it was, he could no where go
And with a waue brusten was his stere
His ship was rent so lowe, in suche manere
That Carpenter could it not amende
The see by night as any Torche brende
For woode, and posseth him vp and doun
Till Neptune hath of hym compassioun
And Thetis Chorus, Triton, and thei all
And maden him vp a londe to fall
Whereof that Phillis Lady was and Quene
Lycurgus doughter, fairer vnto sene
Then is the floure again the bright Sonne
Unneth is Demophon to londe i wonne
Weake and eke werie, and his folke forpined
Of werinesse, and also enfamined
And to the death he was almoste idriuen
His wise folke counsaile haue him yeuen
To seken helpe and succour of the Quene
And loken what his grace might bene
And maken in that lande some cheuesaunce
And kepen him fro wo, and fro mischaunce
For sicke he was, and almoste at the death
Unneth might he speake, or drawe breath
And lieth in Rhodopeia hym for to reste
Whē he may walke, him thought it was beste
Unto the countrey to seken for succour
Men knewe him wele, and did hym honour
For at Athenes Duke and Lorde was he
As Theseus his father hath ibe
That in his tyme was greate of renoun
No man so greate in all his regioun
And like his father of face and of stature
And false of loue, it came hym of nature
As doeth the fore Renarde, the fores sonne
Of kinde he could his old fatheer wonne
Without lore, as can a Drake swimme
When it is caught, and caried to the brimme
This honorable quene Phillis doth hī chere
Her liketh well his sporte and his manere
But I am agroted here before
To write of hem that in loue been forlorne

And

There endeth the Legende of Philomene, and here followeth the Legende of Phillis.

By proue, as well as by auctorite
That wicked fruicte commeth of a wicked tree
That maie ye find, if that it liketh you
But for this ende, I spelle this as now
To tell you of false Demophon
In loue a falser heard I neuer non
But it were his father Theseus

And eke to haste me in my Legende
Whiche to performe, God me grace sende
Therefore I passe shortly in this wise
ye haue well heard of Theseus the gise
In the betraiyng of faire Adriane
That of her pite kept him fro his bane
At short wordes, right so Demophon
The same waie, and the same pathe hath gon
That did his false father Theseus
For vnto Phillis hath he swore thus
To wedden her, and her his trouthy plight
And pined of her all the good he might
When he was hole & sounde, and had his reste
And doth with Phillis, what so that him lest
As well I could, if that me liste so
Tellen all his doyng to and fro
He saied to his countrey mote hym saile
For there he would her weddyng apparaile
As fill to her honour, and his also
And openly he tooke his leaue tho
And to her swore he would not soiourne
But in a moneth again he would retourne
And in that londe let make his ordinaunce
As bery Lorde, and tooke the obeisaunce
Well and hombly, and his Shippes dight
And home he goeth the next waie he might
For vnto Phillis yet came he nought
And that hath she so harde and sore ibought
Alas, as the storie doeth vs recorde
She was her owne death with a corde
When that she saw that Demophō her traied
But first wrote she to him, and fast him prayed
He would come, and deliuer her of pain
As I rehearse shall a worde or twain
He liste not vouchsafe on him to swinke
Dispenden on him a penne full of yuke
For false in loue was he, right as his sire
The Deuill set her soules bothe on a fire
But of the letter of Phillis woll I write
A worde or twain, although it be but lite
Thine hostesse (q she) O Demophon
Thy Phillis, whiche that is so wo begon
Of Rhodopeie, vpon you mote complain
Ouer the terme set betwirt vs twain
That ye ne holden forwarde, as ye saied
your ancre, whiche ye in our hauen laied
Right vs, that ye would comen out of doubt
Or that the Moone ones went about
But times fower, the Mone hath hid her face
Sens thilke daie ye went fro this place
And fower tymes light the worlde again
But for all that, yet shall I sothly sain
yet hath the streme of Scythō not brought
From Athens the ship, yet came it nought
And if that ye the terme reken would
Is I or other true louers doe should
I plain not (God wot) before my daie
But all her letter written I ne maie
By order, for it were to me a charge
Her letter was right long, and thereto large
But here and there, in rime I haue it laied
There as me thought that she hath wel saied
Shē saied, the sailes cometh not again
Ne to the worde, there nis no fey certain
But I wot why ye come not (q she)
For I was of my loue to you so fre
And of the Goddes that ye haue swore
That her vengeaunce fall on you therefore
ye be not suffisaunt to beare the pain
To moche trusted I, well maie I sain
Upon your linage, and your faire tong
And on your teares, falsly out wrong
How could ye wepe so by craft? (q shē)
Maie there soche teares fained be?
Now certes, if ye would haue in memorie
It ought be to you but little glorie
To haue a selie maide thus betraied
To God (q she) praie I, and oft haue praied
That it be now the greatest price of all
And moste honour, that euer you shall befall
And when thine old aunceters painted be
In whiche men maie her worthinesse se
Then praie I God, thou painted be also
That folke maie reden, forthe by as thei go
Lo this is he, that with his flattery
Betraied hath, and doen her villany
That was his true loue, in thought and dede
But sothly of o poinct yet maie thei rede
That ye been like your father, as in this
For he begiled Ariadne iwis
With soche an arte, and soche subtelte
As thou thy selues hast begiled me
As in that poinct, although it be not feire
Thou folowest certain, and art his heire
But sens thus sinfully ye me begile
My bodie mote ye sene, within a while
Right in the hauen of Athenes fletyng
Withouten Sepulture and buriyng
Though ye been harder then is any stone
And whē this letter was forth sent anone
And knewe how bretell and how fals he was
She for dispaire fordid her self, alas
Soche sorowe hath she, for she beset her so
Beware ye women of your subtill so
Sens yet this daie, men maie ensample se
And trusteth now in loue no man but me.

Here endeth the Legende of Phillis.

Here

Of Hypermestre.

There foloweth the legende of Hypermestre.

IN Grece whilom wer bretherne two
Of whiche that one was called Danao
That many a sonne hath of his bodie wonne
As soche falselouers ofte conne
Emong his sonnes all there was one
That aldermoste he loued of euerychone
And when this child was borne, this Danao
Shope him a name, and called hym Lino
That other brother called was Egiste
That was of loue as false as euer him liste
And many a daughter gate he in his life
Of whiche he gate vpon his right wife
A doughter dere, and did her for to call
Hypermestra, yongest of hem all
The whiche childe of her natiuite
To all good thewes borne was she
As liked to the Goddes or she was borne
That of the sheke she should be the corne
The werdes that we clepen destine
Hath shapen her, that she must nedes be
Pitous, sad, wise, true as stele
And to this woman it accordeth wele
For though that Venus yaue her great beute
With Iupiter compowned so was she
That conscience, trouthe, and drede of shame
And of her wifehode for to kepe her name
This thought her was felicite as here
And reed Mars, was that tyme of the yere
So feble, that his malice is him rafte
Repressed hath Venus his cruell crafte
And what with Venus, and other oppression
Of houses, Mars his venime is a don
That Hypermestre dare not handle a knife
In malice, though she should lese her life
But natheless, as heauen gan tho turne
Two bad aspectes, hath she of Saturne
That made her to die in prison
And I shall after make mencion
Of Danao and Egistes also
And though so be that thei were brethrē two
For thilke tyme nas spared no linage
It liked hem to maken mariage
Betwixt Hypermestre, and him Lino
And casten soche a daie it shall be so
And full accorded was it vtterly
The araie is wrought, the tyme is fast by
And thus Lino hath of his fathers brother
The doughter wedded, & ech of hē hath ōther
The torches brennen, and the lampes bright
The Sacrifice been full ready dight
Thensence out of the fire reheth soote
The floure, the leefe, is rent vp by the roote
To maken garlandes and crounes hie
Full is the place of sound of Minstralcie
Of songes amourous of mariage
As thilke tyme was the plain vsage
And this was in the paleis of Egiste
That in his hous was lord, right as him liste
And thus that daie thei driuen to an ende
The frendes taken leue, and home thei wend
The night is come, the bride shall go to bed
Egiste to his chamber fast him sped
And priuely let his doughter call
When that the hous voided was of hem all
He looketh on his doughter with glad chere
And to her spake, as ye shall after here.
My right doughter, tresour of mine herte
Sens first that daie, ỹ shapen was my sherte
Or by the fatall fuster had my dome
So nye myne harte neuer thing ne come
As thou Hypermestre, doughter dere
Take hede what thy father saieth thee here
And werke after thy wiser euer mo
For alderfirst doughter, I loue thee so
That all the worlde to me nis halfe so lefe
Ne nolde rede thee to thy mischefe
For all the good vnder the colde Mone
And what I meane, it shal be said right sone
With protestacion, as saine these wise
That but thou doe, as I shall thee deuise
Thou shalt be ded, by him ỹ al hath wrought
At shorte wordes thou ne scapest nought
Out of my paleis, or that thou be deed
But thou consent, and werke after my reed
Take this to the fearfull conclusion
This Hypermestre cast her yen doun
And quoke as doeth the leefe of alhe grene
Deed wext her hew, and like as aschen to sene
And said: Lorde and father all your will
After my might, God wote I shall fulfill
So it be to me no confusion.
I nill (q he) haue none excepcion
And out he caught a knife, as rasour kene
Hide this (q he) that it be nat isene
And when thine housbonde is to bed go
While that he slepeth, cut his throte a two
For in my dreme it is warned me
How that my neuewe shall my bane be
But whiche I not, wherefore I woll be liber
If thou saie naie, we two shall haue a biker
As I haue said, by him that I haue sworne
This Hypermester hath nigh her wit forlorn
And for to passē harmeless out of that place

She

She grañted him, there was non other grace
And withall a costrell taketh he tho
And saied, hereof a draught or two
Yeue him drinke, when he goeth to reste
As he shall slepe as long as euer thee leste
The narcotikes and apies been so strong
And go thy waie, lest that him thinke to long
Out cometh the bride, & with full sobre chere
As is of maidens oft the manere
To chamber brought, with reuel & with song
And shortlie, leste this tale be to long
This Lino and she beth brought to bed
And euery wight out at the doore him sped
The night is wasted, and he fell a slepe
Full tenderly beginneth she to wepe
She rist her vp, and dredefully she quaketh
As doeth the braunch, that zephirus shaketh
And husht were all in Aragone that cite
As colde as any Froste now wexeth she
For pite by the harte strained her so
And drede of death doeth her so moche wo
That thrise doune she fill, in soche a were
She riste her vp, and stakereth here and there
And on her handes faste looketh she
Alas, shall myne handes bloodie be
I am a maide, and as by my nature
And by my semblaunt, and by my vesture
Myne handes been not shapen for a knife
As for to reue no man fro his life
What Deuill haue I with the knife to do?
And shall I haue my throte corue a two?
Then shall I blede alas, and be shende
And nedes this thing mote haue anende
Or he or I mote nedes lese our life
Now certes (q̃ she) sens I am his wife
And hath my faithe, yet is it bette for me
For to be dedde, in wifely honeste
Then be a traitour, liuyng in my shame
Be as be maie, for earnest or for game
He shall awake, and rise and go his waie
Out at this gutter, er that it be daie
And wept full tenderlie vpon his face
And in her armes gan him to embrace
And him she roggeth, and awaketh soft
And at the windowe lepe he fro the loft
When she hath warned him, & doen him bote
This Lino swift was, and light of foote
And from her ran, a full good paas
This selie woman is so weake, alas
And helplesse, so that er she ferre went
Her cruell father did her for to hent
Alas Lino, why art thou so vnkinde
Why ne hast thou remembred in thy minde
And taken her, and led her forthe with thee
For when she sawe that gone awaie was he
And that she might not so fast go
Ne folowen him, she sate doune right tho
And til she was caught, and fettred in prison
This tale is saied for this conclusion.

¶ Thus endeth the Legendes of good women, and here followeth a balade of Chaucer.

¶ A goodlie balade of Chaucer.

Other of norture, best beloued of all
And freshe floure, to whō good thrift God sende
Your childe, if it luste you me so to call
All be I vnable my self so to pretende
To your discretion I recommende
Mine harte and all, with euery circūstaunce
All holly to be vnder your gouernaunce.

Moste desire I, and haue, and euer shall
Thing, which might your hartes ease amēde
Haue me excused, my power is but small
Nathelesse of right ye ought to commende
My good will, whiche faine would entende
To doe you seruice, for all my suffisaunce
Is holly to be vnder your gouernaunce.

Meulx vn: in harte: whiche neuer shall apall
Aie freshe and new, and right glad to dispēde
My time in your seruice, what so befall
Besechyng your excellence to defende
My simplenesse, if ignoraunce offende
In any wise, sith that myne affiaunce
Is hollie to been vnder your gouernaunce.

Daisie of light, very ground of comfort
The Sunnes doughter (ye hight) as I rede
For when he westreth, farwell your disport
By your nature anone right for pure drede
Of the rude night, ẏ with his boistous wede
Of darkenesse, shadoweth our emispere
Then closen ye, my liues Ladie dere.

Daunyng the daie, to his kinde resort
And Phebus your father, w̄ his stremes rede
Adorneth the morowe, consuming the sort
Of mistie cloudes, that woulden ouerlede
True humble hartes, with her mistie hede
Nere comfort a daies, when iyen clere
Disclose and sprede my liues Ladie dere.

Ie vouldray: but greate God disposeth
And maketh casuell by his prouidence
Soche thing, as mannes frele wit purposeth
All for the best, if that your conscience
Not grutche it, but in humble pacience
It receiue, for God saieth without fable
A faithfull harte euer is acceptable.

Cautels, who so vseth gladlie gloseth
To eschewe soche it is right high prudence
What ye saied ones, mine harte opposeth
That my writyng Japes in your absence
Pleased you moche better then my presence
Yet can I more, ye be not excusable
A faithfull harte euer is acceptable.

Quaketh my penne, my spirite supposeth
That in my writing ye find woll some offēce
Min hart welkneth thus sone, anon it riseth
Now hotte, now colde, and eft in feruence
That misse is, is caused of negligence
And not of malice, therefore beth merciable
A faithfull harte euer is acceptable.

¶ Lenuoye

For complaint, forthe lackyng eloquence
For little letter of endityng lame
I haue besought my ladies Sapience
Of thy behalfe, to accept in game
Thine inabilite, doe thou thesame
Abide, haue more yet: Je serue Jouesse
Now forth, I close thee in holy Venus name
Thee shall vnclose my hartes gouernerresse.

¶ Thus endeth this Ballade: And here followeth the Booke of Boecius de consolatione Philosophie.

BOECIVS DE CONSOLATIONE PHILOSOPHIE.

Carmina qui quondam studio florenti peregi
Flebilis heu mestos cogor inire modos.

ALas, I wepyng am constrained to begin verse of sorowefull matter, that whilom in florishyng studie made delitable ditees. For lo, rendyng muses of Poetes, enditē to me thinges to be writen, and drerie teares. At laste no drede ne might ouercome tho muses, that thei ne werren fellowes, and folowden my waie, that is to saie: when I was exiled, thei that weren of my youthe, whilom weelfull and grene, comforten now sorowfull wierdes, of me olde man: for elde is comen vnwarely vpon me, hasted by the harmes that I haue, and sorowe hath commaunded his age to bee in me. Heeres hore aren shad ouertimeliche vpon my head: and the flacke skinne trembleth of mine empted bodie. Thilke death of men is welefull, that ne commeth not in yeres that be swet, but cometh to wretches often icleped: Alas, alas, with how defe an eare death cruell turneth awaie fro wretches, and naieth for to close wepyng iyen. While fortune vnfaithfull, fauoured me with light goodes, that sorowfull houre, that is to saie, the death, had almoste drente myne hedde: but now for fortune cloudie, hath chaunged her deceiuable chere to me warde, myne vnpitous life draweth along vngreable dwellynges. O ye my frendes, what, or wherto auaunted ye me to been welfull? For he that hath fallen, stode in no stedfast degree.

Hec dum mecum tacitus ipse reputarem, queremoniamq; lacrimabilem stili officio designarem: astitisse mihi supra verticem visa est mulier reuerendi admodum vultus, oculis ardentibus, & vltra communē. &c.

IN the meane while, that I stil recorded these thynges with my self, and marked my wepelie complainte, with office of poinctell: I sought stondyng abouen the hight of mine hed a woman of full greate reuerence, by semblaunt. Her iyen brennyng, and clere, seyng ouer

ouer the common might of menne, with a liuely colour, & with soche vigour and strength that it ne might not been nempned, all were it so, that she were full of so greate age, that menne woulden not trowen in no manere, that she were of our elde.

The stature of her, was of doutous Judgemente, for sometyme she constrained and shronke her selven, like to the common measure of menne: And sometyme it semed, that she touched the heauen, with the hight of her hedde. And when she houe her hedde higher, she perced the self heauen, so that the sight of menne lookyng was in idell: her clothes wer maked of right delie threedes, and subtel craft of perdurable mattier. The whiche clothes, she had wouen with her owne handes, as I knewe well after, by her self declaryng, and shewyng to me the beautie: The whiche clothes a darkenesse of a forleten and dispised elde, had dulked and darked, as it is wonte to darke by smoked Images.

In the nethereste hemme or border of these clothes, menne redde iwouen therein, a Grekishe Π. that signifieth the life Actiue, and aboue that letter, in the hiest bordure, a Grekishe Θ, that signifieth the life contemplatife. And betwene these twoo letters, there were seen degrees nobly wrought, in maner of ladders, by whiche degrees, menne might climben from the nethereste letter, to the vpereste: natheleſſe handes of some men, hadden kerue that clothe, by violēce or by strēgth and eueriche manne of hem, had borne awaie soche peces, as he might getten. And forsothe this forsaied woman, bare smale bookes in her right hande, and in her left hand, she bare a scepter. And when she sawe these Poeticall muses, approchyng aboute my bed, and endityng wordes to my weppynges, she was a litle amoued, and glowed with cruell iyen. Who (q she) hath suffered approchen to this sicke manne, these commen strompettes, of which is the place, that menne callen Theatre, the whiche onely ne asswagen not his sorowes with remedies, but thei would feden and norishe hym with swete venime: Forsothe, that been tho that with thornes, and prichynges of talentes of affeccions, whiche that been nothyng fructuous nor profitable, distroien the Corne, plentuous of fruictes of reason. For thei holden hartes of men in vsage; but thei ne deliuer no folke fro maladie. But if the muses had withdrawē fro me with your flatteries, any an vnconnyng and vnprofitable manne, as been wont to finde commenly emong the people, I would well suffre the lasse greuously. For why, in soche an vnprofitable man, myne ententes were nothyng endamaged. But ye withdrowen fro me this man, that he hath been nourished in my studies or scoles of Eleaticis, and of Achademicis in Grece. But goeth now rather awaie ye Mermaidens, whiche that been swete, till it be at the last, and suffreth this man to be cured and healed by my muses, that is to say, by my notefull sciences. And thus this companie of muses iblamed, casten wrothly ỳ chere, downward to the yearth, and shewing by rednesse her shame, thei passeden sorowfully the threshold. And I of whom the sight plounged in teares was darked, so that I ne might not know, what that woman was, of so Imperiall auctoritie, I wore all abashed and stonied, and cast my sight doune to the yerth, and began still for to abide, what she would doen afterward. Then came she nere, and set her doune vpon the vttereste corner of my bed, and she beholdyng my chere, that was cast to the yearth, heauie and greuous of wepyng, complained with these woordes (that I shall saine) the perturbacion of my thought.

Heu quam precipiti mersa profundo. Mens habet, & propria luce relicta. Tendit ad externas ire tenebras. Terrenis quoties flatibus acta. Crescit in immensum noxia cura. Hic quondam cœlo liber aperto.

ALas, howe the thought of this man, dreinte in ouerthrowyng depenesse, dulleth and forleteth his proper clerenesse, mintyng to gone into forain darkenesse, as ofte as his anoious belines wereth without measure, that is driuē with worldlie windes. This man that whilome was free, to whom the heauen was open and knowen, and was wont to gone in heauenly pathes, and sawe the lightnesse of the redde Sunne, and beheelde the Sterres of the colde Moone, and whiche Sterre in heauen, vseth wanderyng recourses ifitte by diuers spheres. This manne ouercomer had comprehended all this thyng, by nomber of accompting in Astronomie. And ouer this, he was wont to seken the causes, whens the sowning windes mouen, and beten the smothe water of the Sea. And what spirite tourneth the stable heauen. And why the sterre riseth out of the red East, to fallen in the westeren waues. And what attēpreth the lustie houres of the

firſte Sommer ſeaſon, and yighteth and apparaileth the yearth with roſie floures. And who maketh the plumtuous Autumpne, in full yeres fleeten with yeauie Grapes. And eke this manne was wonte, to tell the diuers cauſes of nature that were hidde. Alas, how lightlie is empted the light of his thought, and his necke is preſſed with yeauie chaines, and beareth his chere enclined adowne for the greate weight, and is conſtrained to looken on the fole yearth.

Sed magis medicine(inquit)tempus eſt quam querele. Boe. Tum vero totis in me intenta luminibus. Philo. Tu ne ille es(ait)qui noſtro quondam lacte nutritus, noſtris educatus alimentis, in virilis animi robur euaſeras, &c.

QUIT tyme is now of Medicine (q ſhe) more then complainte. Forſothe then ſhe entendynge to me warde, with all the lookyng of her iyen ſaied. Art not thou he(q ſhe)that whilome I nouriſhed with my Milke, and foſtred with my meates, were eſcaped and commen to the courage of a parfaite manne? Certes, I yaue thee ſoche armours, that if thou thy ſelf, ne haddeſt firſte caſte hem awaie, thei ſhoulden haue defended thee in ſikernelle, that maie not bee ouercomen. Knoweſt thou not me? why art thou ſtill? Is it for ſhame, or for aſtoniyng? If were me leuer it were for ſhame, but it ſemeth me that aſtoniyng hath oppreſſed thee. And when ſhe ſawe me not onely ſtil, but rather without office of tongue, and all dombe, ſhe laied her hande ſoftelie vpon my breaſt, and ſaied: Here is no perill(q ſhe)he is fallen into a litrage, whiche that is a common ſickenelle, to hartes that been deceiued. He hath a little foryeten hymſelf. But certes he ſhall lightlie remembren hymſelf, if ſo bee that he hath knowen me er nowe. And that he maie doen ſo, I will wipe his iyen alittle, that be darked by the cloude of mortall thynges. Theſe woordes ſaied ſhe, and with the lappe of her garnemente, iplited in a krounce ſhe dried myne iyen, that weren full of the wawes of my weppynges.

Tunc me diſcuſſa liquerunt nocte tenebre, Luminibuſq; prior redit vigor. Vt cum precipiti glomerantur ſidera choro. Nimboſiſq; polus ſtetit imbribus. Sol latet, ac nondum cœlo venientibus aſtris, &c.

THus when that Nighte was diſcuſſed awaie, Darkeneſſe forlete me, and to my iyen repaired again her firſt ſtrength. And right as by enſample, as the Sunne is hidde when the Sterres been couerde with Cloudes, by a ſwifte winde that hight Chorus, and the Firmamente ſtaute derched by weate plungie Cloudes. And that the Sterres not apperen vpon the heauen, ſo that the Night ſemed ſprad vpon the yearth. If then the wind that hight Boreas, iſent out of the Caue, of the Countrey of Trace, beateth this night, that is to ſaine, chaſeth it awaie, and diſcouereth the cloſed daie. Thā ſhineth Phebus, iſhaken with ſodaine light, and ſmiteth with his beames in marueilyng iyen.

Haude aliter triſticie nebulis diſſolutis, hauſi cœlum, & ad cognoſcendam medicantis faciem, mentem recepi. Iraq; vbi in eam deduxi oculos, intuitumq; defixi, reſpicio nutricem meam, in cuius ab adoleſcentia. &c.

RIght ſo and none otherwiſe, the Cloudes of ſorowe diſſolued, and dooen awaie, I tooke heauen, and receiued myndе to knowen the face of my Phiſicien: ſo that I ſette myne iyen vpon her, and faſtened my lookyng. I beheld my Nourice Philoſophie, in whoſe houſe I had conuerſed fro my youthe, and I ſaied thus. O thou Maiſtreſſe of all vertues, diſcended from the ſouerain ſeate, why art thou commen into this ſolitarie place of myne exile? Art thou comen, for thou art made coulpable with me of falſe blames. O (q ſhe) my nourice, ſhould I forſake thee now, ſ ſhould I not parten with thee by commen trauaile, the charge that thou haſte ſuffered for enuie of my name? Certes, it were not leſull ne ſittyng to Philoſophie, to leten without companie, the waie of hym that is innocente: Shouldе I then redout my blame, and agriſe as though there wer befallen a newe thing? For troweſt thou that Philoſophie, bee now alderfirſt aſſailed in perilles, by folke of wicked maner? Haue I not ſtriuen with full grate ſtrief, in olde tyme, before the age of my Plato, ayenſt the foolehardineſſe of folye? And eke theſame Plato liuyng, his Maiſter Socrates, deſerued victorie of vnrightfull death in my preſence. The heritage of the whiche Socrates, the heritage, is to ſaine the Doctrine, of the whiche Socrates, in his opinion

of

of felicite, that I cleape welefulnesse: when that the people of Epicuriens and Stoiciēs, and many other, enforced theim to go rauish, euery man for his parte, that is to saine: that euerich of hem would drawen, to the defence of his opiniō, the wordes of Socrates. Thei as in partie of their praie, to droune me, criyng and debatyng there ayenste, and coruen and renten my clothes, that I had wouen with myne owne handes. And with tho clothes that thei had araced out of my clothes, thei wenten awaie, wenyng that I had gone with hem euery dele. In whiche Epicuriens and Stoiciens, for as moche as there semed some traces and steppes of my habite. The folie of wenyng tho Epicuriens and Stoiciens, my familiers, peruerted some, through the errour of the wicked multitude of hem: This is to sain, for thei semed Philosophers, thei weren pursued to the death and slaine. So if thou hast not knowen the exilyng of Anaxagoras, ne the enpoisoning of Socrates, ne the tourmentes of Zeno, for thei weren straungers, yet mightest thou haue knowen the Senecas, the Canios, and the Soranos: Of whiche folke, the renome is neither ouer olde ne vnsolempne. The whiche menne nothyng els ne brought to the death, but onely for thei were enformed of my maners, and semeden mooste vnlike to the studies of wicked folke. And for thy thou oughtest not to wondren, though that I in the bitter sea, be driuē with tempestes blowing about. In the whiche this is my moste purpose, that is to sain, to displeasen wicked men. Of whiche shrewes, all be the hooste neuer so greate, it is to dispise, for it is not gouerned with no leader of reason, but it is rauished onely by fletyng errour, folilie and lightlie. And if thei sometyme, make an hooste ayenst vs, assaile vs as strenger: our leader draweth together, his richesses into his Toure, and thei been ententife, about sarpleris or sachelles, vnprofitable for to taken. But we then been high abouen, siker from all tumulte and woode noise, warenestored and enclosed in soche a Paleis, whither as the clateryng or anoiyng folie, maie not attaine, we scorne soche raueners, and henters of foulest thynges.

Quisquis composito se renns euo, Fatum sub pedibus egit superbum: Fortunamq; tuens vtramq; rectus, Inuictum potuit tenere vultum, &c.

Who so it bee that cleare of vertue, sadde, and well ordinate of liuyng, that hath putte vnder foote the proude wierdes, and looketh vpright vppon either Fortune, he maie holden his chere vndiscomfited.

The rages ne the manaces of the sea, commouyng and chasyng vnware, heat from the bottome, ne shall not moue that manne, ne the vnstable Mountaigne that hight Uesenus, that writheth out through his broken Chimeneis, smokyng Fires, ne the waie of Thonder leite, that is wonte to smiten high Toures, ne shall not moue that man. Whereto then wretches drede ye Tirauntes, that been wood, and felōnous with any strength? Hope after nothyng, ne drede thou not: and so shalte thou disarmen the ire of thilke vnmightie Tiraunte. But who that quakyng dredeth, or desireth thyng that is not stable of his right, that manne that so dooeth, hath caste awaie his shilde, and is remoued fro his place, and enlaseth hym in the chaine, with the whiche he maie be drawen.

Sentis ne (inquit) hec? Atq; animo illabuntur tuo? Expers ne es lyre? Quid fles? Quid lachrimis manas? Si operam medicantis expectas, oportet vt vulnus detegas tuum. &c

Felest thou (q̄ she) these thyngs? And entren thei aught in thy courage? Art thou like an Asse to the harp? Why wepest thou? Why spilleste thou teares? If thou abidest after helpe of the Leche, thee behoueth discouer thy wounde? Tho I had gathered strength in my courage, and answered and saied. And nedeth it (q̄ I) of rehearsyng, or of amonicion, and sheweth it not inough by hymself, the sharpenes that wexeth woode against me. Ne moueth it not thee to se the face, or the maner of this place? Is this the librarie that thou haddest chosen for a right certain liege, to thee in mine hous there as thou disputest oft with me, of the science of thynges, touchyng diuinite, and touthynge mankynde? Was then myne habite soche as it is now, was my face or chere, soch as is now, when I sought with the secretes of nature, when thou enformedest my maners, and the reason of all my life, to the ensample of thorder of heauen? Is not this the guerdone that I referre to thee, to whom I haue be obeisaunt? Certes, thou enformedest by the mouthe of Plato this sentence, that is

to saine: that comen thinges or comunalties weren blisfull, if thei that had studied all fully to wisedome, gouerneden thilke thynges: or els if it so befell, that the gouernours of cōmunalties, studien to gette wisedome. Thou saidest ehe by the mouthe of the saied Plato, that it was a necessarie cause, wise menne to taken and desiren the gouernaunce of comen thynges, for that the gouernaunce of citees, sleft in the handes of felonous tourmentors, citezeins ne shoulden not bringen in pestilēce and distruccion to good folke. And therefore I followyng thilke aucthours, desired to put forthe in execucion and in acte, of comen administracion thilke thinges, that I had learned of thee, emong my secrete resting whiles, thou and God, that put in the thoughtes of wise folke, been knowen with me, that nothyng ne brought me to maistrie or dignitie, but the common studie of all goodnesse. And therfore cometh it, that betwene wicked folk and me, haue been greuous discordes, that ne mighten not bee released by praiers: for this libertie hath the fredome of conscience, that the wrathe of more mightie folke, hath alwaie been dispised of me, for sauaciō of right. How oft haue I resisted and withstande, that man that hight Canigast, that made alwaie thassaut, ayenst the prosper fortunes of poor feeble folke? How eft ehe haue I put of or cast out hym Triguill, Prouoste of the Kynges hous, bothe of the wronges that he had begonne to doen, and ehe fully performed? How often haue I couered and defended by the aucthoritie of me, put ayenst perilles, that is to saine: put myne auctoritie in perill, for the wretched poore folke, that the couetise of straungers vnpunished, turmenteden alwaie with misease, and greuaunces out of nomber? Neuer manne yet drowe me fro right to wrong. When I sawe the Fortunes and the richesses of the people of the Prouinces, been harmed and amenused, either by priuie rauines, or by comen tributes or cariages, as sory was I, as thei ẏ suffreden the harme. Glose. When Theoderike kyng of Gothes in a dedde yere had his garners full of corne, and commaunded that no man should buye no corne, till his corne wer sold, and at a greuous dere prise: Beoce withstoode that ordinaunce, and ouercame it, knowyng all this the king Theodorike hymself. Coempcion is to saie, comen achate or buiyng together, that were established vpon the people, by soche a maner imposicion, as who so bought a bushell of corne, he must peuen the kyng the liueth parte. Textus. When it was in the sore hongrie tyme, there was established greuous and vnprofitable coempcion, that men seen well, it shuld greatlie tourmenten and endomagen all the Prouince of Campaine. I tooke strife ayenst the Prouost of the Pretorie, for the common profite. And the knowyng of it, I ouercame it, so that the coempcion was not alked, ne tooke effecte.

Pauline a Counsailour of Roome, the richesses of the whiche Pauline, the hondes of the Paleis, that is to saie, the officers wolden haue deuoured by hope and couetise: yet drowe I out of the iowes, of hem that gapeden. And for as moche as the paine of the accusacion a Judged before, ne should not sodainly henten, ne punishen wrongfully Albine a Counsailour of Roome, I putte me ayenst the hates, and indignacions of the accusour Cipzian. Is it not then inough, sens that I haue purchased great discordes ayenst my self? But I ought bee more assured ayenst other folke, that for the loue of right wisnesse I neuer reserued nothyng to my self, to hemwarde of the kynges halle, by whiche I were the more liker. But thzough tho same accusours accusyng, I am condempned. Of the nomber of whiche accusours, one Basilius that whilome was chased out of the Kynges seruice, is now compelled in accusyng of my name, for nede of forsaine money.

Also, Opilion and Gaudencius, haue accused me: All be it, so that the Justice Regall had whilome demed theim bothe, to gone into exile, for her tretcheries and fraudes without nomber. To whiche iudgement theinolden not obeye, but defended hem by the liberalnesse of holie houses, that is to saine, fledden into Seintewarie: And then when this was apperceiued by the Kynge, he commaunded, but if thei auoided the Citee of Rauenne, by certayne daye assigned, that menne should marken hem on the forehedde, with an hotte yron, and chasen hem out of the toune. Now what thyng semeth might be likened to this crueltie, for certes, this same daie was receiued, the acculing of my name, by thilke same accusoures? What maie bee saied hereto? Hath my studie and my connynge deserued thus, or els the forsaied dampnacion of me, made theim rightfull accusours or no? Was not fortune a shamed of this? Certes, all had not fortune ben a shamed, that innocēce was accused, yet ought she haue had shame of the

filthe

filthe of myne accusours. But aske thou me, of what gilte I am accused. Wen saine that I would sauen the companie of the Senatours. And desirest thou to heren, in what maner I am accused, that I should haue disstourbed the accusour to bearen Letters, by whiche he should haue made the Senatours giltie, ayenst the kynges roiall Maiestie. O Maistresse, what demest thou of this? Shall I forsake this blame, that I ne bee no shame to thee? Certes, I haue would it (that is to saie) the sauacion of the Senate, ne I shall neuer let to wilne it, and that I confesse and am a knowe, but the entente of the accusour to been disstourbed, shall cease. Shall I clepe that a felonie or a synne, that I haue desired the sauacion of the order of the Senate. And certes, had thilke same Senate, doen through her decretes and her iudgementes, as though it wer a sinne and a felonie, that is to wilne the sauacion of them. But folie that lieth alwaie to hymselfe, maie not chaunge the merite of thynges, ne I trowe not by the iudgemente of Socrates, that it were lefull to me, to hide the sothe, ne assente to lesynges: but certes, how so euer it bee of this, I putte it to gessen or prisen, of the iudgement of thee, and of wise folke, of whiche thynge all the ordinaunce and the sothe (for as mocke as folke that been to comen after our daies, shal knowen it) I haue putte it in Scripture, and in remembraunce. For touchyng the Letters falsely made, by whiche Letters I am accused, to haue hoped the freedome of Roome, what apertaineth me to speaken thereof. Of whiche Letters, the fraude had been shewed apertlie, if I had had libertie for tohaue vsed and been at confession of mine accusours, the whiche thyng in all nedes hath great strēgth For what other fredom maie menne hopen? Certes, I would that some other freedome might be hoped, I would then haue aunswered, by the woordes of a man, that hight Camus: For when he was accused of Canius, Cesar Germanes soonne, that he was knowyng and consentyng, of a coniuracion made ayenst hym. This Canius aunswered thus: if I had wiste it, thou haddest not wiste it. In whiche thyng, sorowe hath not so dulled my witte, that I plain onely, that shrewde folke apparailen felonies againste vertue, but I wōder greatly, how that thei maie performe thinges that thei haue hoped for to deon, for why ne wil ne shrewdnesse that cometh paraventure of our defaute. But it is like a Monster and a marueile, how that in the presente sight of GOD, maie been achieued and performed sothe thynges, as euery felenous manne, hath conceiued in his thought againste innocentes. For whiche thynge, one of thy familers not vnskilfull, asked thus. If GOD is: whens comen wicked thynges. But all had it been lefull that felonous folk, that nowe desiren the blood, and the death of all good menne. And ek of the Senate, haue wilned to gone distroyē me, whom thei haue seen alwaie batailen and defenden good men and ek all the Senate, that had not deserued of the fathers (that is to saine of the Senatours) that thei shoulden will my destruccion. Thou remembrest well as I gesse, that when I would doen or saine any thyng, thou thy self alwaie presente ruledest me.

At the citee of Verone, when that the king gredie of comen slaughter, calle hym to transporten vpō al thorder of the senate, the gilte of his roiall Maiestie, of the whiche gilte, that Albin was accused, with how greate sikernesse of perill to me, defended I all the Senate: Thou wotest well that I saie sothe, ne I ne auaunted me neuer in praisyng of my self. For alwaie, when any wight receiueth precious renome, in auauntyng of hymself, or his werkes, he amenuseth the secree of his conscience.

But now thou maiest well seen, to what ende I am comen for myne innocencie, I receiue paine of false felonie, for gwerdone of verie vertue. And what open confession of felonie had euer Judges, so accordaunte in cruelte, that is to saine, as myne acculyng hath, that either errour of mannes witte, or els condicion of Fortune, that is vncertaine to all mortall folke, ne submitted some of hē, that is to saie, that it ne enclined some Judge to haue pite or compassion. For although I had been accused, that I would brenne holie houses, and strangle Prestes with wicked swearde, or that I had greithed death to all good men, algates the sentence should haue punished me presente confessed and conuicte.

But now I am remoued from the Citee of Rome, almoste fiue hundred thousand paas, I am without defence dampned, to proscripciō and to death, for the studies and bounties that I haue doen to the Senate. But o well been thei worthie of merite, as who saieth: naie, there might yet neuer none of hem bee conuict of sothe a blame as mine is. Of whiche trespace mine accusours seen full wel the

dignitie, for thei would darken it with medling of some felonie. Thei baren me on hond and saied, that I had polute and defouled my conscience with Sacrilege, for couetise of dignitie: and certes, thou thy self that art plãted in me, chacedest out of the siege of my corage, all couetise of mortall thynges, ne Sacrilege, ne had no leaue to haue a place in me before thyne yes. For thou droppedest euery daie in mine cares, and in my thought thilke commaundemente of Pythagoras, that is to saie: Weme shall seruen to God, and not to Goddes. Ne it was not conueniente ne none neede, to taken helpe of the foulest spirites, I that thou hast ordeined, and set in soche excellence, that thou madest me like to God, and ouer this, the right cleane secrete chamber of myne hous, that is to saie, my wife, and the companie of mine honest frendes, and my wiues father, as well holie as worthy to bee reuerensed for his deedes, defenden me from all soche suspeccion of soche blame. But oh malice. For thei that accusen me, taken of the Philosophie faith of so great blame, for thei trowen that I haue had affinite to malifice or enchauntment, bicause that I am replenished, & fulfilled with thy teachynges, and enformed of thy maners. And thus it suffiseth not onely, that thy reuerence ne auaile me naught, but if thou of thy frewill, rather bee blemished with mine offencion. But certes, to the harmes that I haue, there betideth yet this encrease of harme, that the gessyng and the iudgemente of moche folke, ne looken no thyng to the desertes of thinges, but onely to the auenture of fortune, and iudgen that only soche thinges been purueied of God, which that temporalle wilfulnesse commaundeth.

Glosa. As thus, that if a wight haue prosperite, he is a good manne, and worthie to haue that prosperitie, and who so hath aduersitie, he is a wicked manne, and God hath forsake hym, & he is worthie to haue that aduersitie. This is the opinion of some folke, and therof cometh ỹ good gessing, first of all thing forsaked wretches. Certes, it greueth me to thinke right now, in diuers sentẽces that the people saith of me: & thus moche I saie, that the last charge of contrarious Fortune is this, that when any blame is laied vpon a caitife, men women, that he hath deserued that he suffereth. And I that am put awaie from good men, and dispoiled of dignities, and defouled of my name by gessyng, haue suffred turmentes for my good deedes. Certes, me seemeth that I see the felonous couines of wicked mẽ habounden in ioie and in gladnesse, and I se that euery lorell, shapeth hym to finde newe fraudes, for to accuse good folk, and I se that good folke bee ouerthrowen, for drede of my perill, and euery luxurious turmentour, dare dooen all felonie vnpunished, and bee excited thereto by pelfes, and innocentes be not onely dispoiled of sikernesse, but of defence, and therto me list to crien to God in this maner.

O stelliferi conditor orbis, Qui perpetuo nixus solio, Rapido cœlum turbine versas, Legemq; pati sidera cogis, Vt nunc pleno lucida cornu. Totis fratris obnia flammis. Condat stellas luna minores: Nunc obscuro pallida cornu Phebo proprior lumina perdat. &c

Thou maker of the wheele, that beareth the sterres, which that art fastened to thy perdurable chaire, and turnest the heauen with a rauesshyng sweigh, and constrainest the sterres to suffre thy Lawe: so that the Moone some tyme shining with her full hornes, metyng with al the beames of the Sunne her brother, hideth the sterres that been lesse. And sometime whẽ the Moone pale, with her darke hornes approcheth the Sunne, leseth her lightes: and that the euin sterre Hesperus, whiche that in the first tyme of the night, bringeth first her colde arising, cometh eft ayen her sted course and is pale by the Morowe at rising of the Sunne, and is then icleped Lucifer. Thou restraines the daie by shorter dwellyng, in the tyme of the colde Winter, that maketh the leaues fall. Thou diuidest the swifte tides of the night, when the hote Sommer is comen. Thy might attempreth the variaunt seasons of the yere, so that Zepherus the debonaire winde, bringeth ayen in the firste Sommer season, the leaues that the winde that highte Boreas, hath reft awaie in Autumpne, that is to saie, the last ende of Sommer, and the sedes that the sterre that highte Arcitures sew, bee woxen high cornes, when the sterre Sirius enchaseth hem. There is nothyng vnboũden from this olde Lawe, ne forletteth the werke of his proper estate.

O thou gouernour, gouerning all thinges by certaine ende, why refusest thou onely to gouerne the werkes of menne by due maner: Why suffrest thou, that slidyng fortune tourneth so greate enterchaunges of thynges, so that anoyous paine that should duelie punishe felones, punissheth Innocentes: And folke of wicked maners, sitten in high

chaires,

chaires, and ennoyeng folke treden (and that vnrightfully) on the neches of holy men. And vertue clere and shinyng naturally, is hid in derke derkenesses, and the rightful man beareth ỹ paine and the blame of the felons. Ne the forsweringe, ne the fraude couerde and kempt with a falſe coloure, ne annoyeth not to shrewednesse, the which shrewdnesse, whā hē list vſen her strength, they reioysen hem to put vnder hem the soueraine kynges, which that the people without nombre dreden. O ỹ what so euer thou be that knyttest al bondes of thinges, loke on these wretches, erthes, we men that been not a foule partie, but a fayre parte of so great a werke: we ben tourmented in this see of fortune. Thou gouernour, with drawe, and restreine the rauishing flodes, and fasten and ferme these yearthes stable, wyth thilke bonde, wyth whiche thou gouernest heuen that is so large.

Hec vbi continuato dolore delatraui: illa vultu placido nihilq; meis questibus mota. Phi. Cum te (inquit) mestum, lacrimantemq; vidissem; illico miserum exulemq; cognoui. Sed quam id longiquum esset exilium.

WHan I had with a contynuall sorowe sobbed, or broken oute these thinges, she ẅ her chere pesible and nothinge amoued with my cōplaintes, said thus. Whan I say ỹ (q she) sorowful & weping, I wist anō that thou wer a wretch & exiled: But I wist neuer how fere thin exile was, yf the tale ne had yshewed it me. But certes al be thou ferre fro thy coūtrey, ỹ nart not put oute of it, but thou hast failed of thy way and gone a mysse. And if thou hast leuer for to wene that thou be put out of thy countre, than haste thou put out thy selfe, rather than anyother wight hath, for no wight (but thou thy self) ne might neuer haue done that to thee: For yf thou remembre thee of what countre thou art borne, it nis nat gouerned by emperours ne by gouernement of multitude, as weren the countreis of hem of Athenes, but one lorde and one kyng, and that is god, that is lord of thy countrey, which that reioyseth him of the dwelling of his cytezins & not for to put hem in exile. Of the which lord it is a fredome to be gouerned by the bridle of hym, and obey to his iustice. Hast thou forgotten thilke olde lawe of thy cyte, in the which cyte it is ordeined and establisshed, that what wyght hath leuer founde therein his seete or his house than els wher, he maie nat be exiled by no righte from that place? For who so that is conteined within the palais of thilke cyte, there is no drede that he maye deserue to be exiled. But who that letteth thee wil tenhabite there, he forletteth also to deserue to be a citezein of thilke cite. So that I say, that the face of this place ne mouethe me not so mykel, as thyne owne face. Ne I ne aske not rather the walles of thy librarie, apparayled and wrought with yuory & with glasse, than after the seete of thy thought, in whiche I put nat whilon bookes, but I put that, that maketh bookes worthy of price or precious: that is to say, sentence of my bokes. And certainly of thy desertes bestowed in comen good, thou haste sayd soth, but after the multitude of thy good dedes, thou haste sayd fewe. And of the honestie or of the falseneſſe of thinges that bene opposed agaīſt the, thou haste remembred thinges that be knowen to all folke. And of the felonies and fraudes of thin accusours, it semeth the to haue touched it, forsoth rightfully and shortly: al mighten the same thinges better & more plentuously ben couthe in the mouthe of the people, that knowethe all this. Thou haste che blamed greatlye and complained of the wrongefull deede of the Senate. And thou haste sorowed for my blame, & thou hast wopen for the dommage of thy renoun that is apeired, and thy last sorowe enchaled ayen fortune, complayneſt the guerdons ne be not euenly polden to the deserts of folke. And in thy latter ende of thy woode muse, thou praydeſte that thylke peace that gouernethe the heuen, shulde gouerne the erthe. But for that many tribulacions of affections haue assailled the, and sorow and yre and weping to drawē the diuerſly, as ỹ art now feeble of thought, mightier remedies ne shullen not yet touchen the, for which we willen somdele vſen lyghter medicynes, so that thylke passions that be waxen harde in swellynge by perturbacions flowynge in to thy thoughte, mowen were easy and softe, to receiue the strength of a more mighty and more egre medicyne by an easier touchyng.

Cum phebi radiis graue Cancri sidus ineſtuat,
Tum qui largo negantibus, Sulcs semina credidit,
Elusus Cereris fide, Quarnas pergat at arbores. Nunquam purpureum nemus Lecturus violas petas. &c.

Whan that the heuy sterre of the Cācre enchaseth by ẏ beames of Phebus: that is to saine. Whā that Phebus the sonne is in ẏ signe of Cācre, who so yeuethe thā largeli his sedes to ẏ felds ẏ refusen to receiue hem, let him gon begiled of trust that he had to his corne, to akehorns of okes. Yf thou wilte gather violettes, ne go thou nat to the purple wodde, whan the feld chirkinge agrisethe of colde, by the felnesse of the winde that hight Aquilone. Yf thou desyrest or wilt vsen grapes, ne seke thou nat a gloutons honde to straine and presse the stalkes of the vyne in the firste sōmer ceason. For Baccus the god of wine, hathe rather yeuen his yeftes to Autumpne the latter ende of sommer. God tokeneth and assygneth the tymes ablynge hem to her propre offyces, ne he suffreth not the stoundes, which that him selfe hath deuyded and contrayned to ben ymedled togider: and for thy he that forletteth certaine ordinaunce of doynge by ouerthrowing way, he ne hath no glad issue or ende of his werkes.

Primum igitur, pateris ne me pauculis rogacionibus statum tue mentis attingere, atq; tentare? vt quis modus sit tue curacionis intelligam. &c.

Firste woldest thou suffre me to touche and assaye, the estate of thought by a fewe demaundes, so that I may vnderstād by, the maner of thy curacion? Aske me (ꝙ I) at thy will, that thou wolt, and I shal answer. Tho saide she thus: Whether wenest thou (ꝙ she) that this world be gouerned folishly by happes & fortunes, or els wenest thou that there be in it any gouernement of reason? B. Certes (ꝙ I) I ne trowe nat in no maner that so certaine thinges shulde be moued by Fortunous fortune, But I wote wel that god, maker and maister is gouernour of his werke, ne was neuer yet day that might put me out of the sothnesse of that sentence. P. So is it (ꝙ she) for the same thing sange thou alitel here beforne, and be wailedest and weptest, that onely men were put out of ẏ cure of god, for of all other thinges thou ne doutest nat, that they nere gouerned by reason. But oughe, I wonder certes gretly why that thou art sicke, sēs that thou arte put in so holsome a sentence: But let vs seken deper. I coniecte that there lacketh I not what. But say me this. Sens that thou ne doutest not that this worlde de gouerned by god, with whiche gouernayle takest thou hede that it is gouerned? Unneth (ꝙ I) know I the sentēce of thy questiō, so that I ne maie not yet answeren to thy demaundes. I was not disceiued (ꝙ she) that there ne failed some what by whiche the malady of perturbacion is crepte in to thy thought, so as the strength of thy paleys shinynge is open: but saye me this. Remēbrest thou what is thende of thynges? and whider thentencion of al kinde tendeth. I haue herde tolde it some tyme (ꝙ I) but drerinesse hathe dulled my memory. Certes (ꝙ she) thou wotest well whence all thinges be comen and proceden. I wote wel (ꝙ I) and aunswerde, that god is beginninge of al. And howe may this be (ꝙ she) that sens thou knowest the beginning of thinges, that thou knoweste nat what is the ende of thinges, but soche ben the customes of perturbacion, and this power thei han that they may moue a man from his place, that is to say, from the stablenesse and perfection of his knowinge, but certes they may nat al arace him, ne aliē him in all: but I wold that thou woldest answere to this. Remēbrest thou that thou arte a man? B. Why shulde I not remembre that (ꝙ I) Phi. Mayst thou not tel me than (ꝙ she) what thinge is a man? Askest thou not me (ꝙ I) whether that I be a reasonable mortall best, I wote well and tonfesse that I am it. Wiste thou neuer yet that thou were anye other thinge (ꝙ she). No (ꝙ I). Nowe well knowe I (ꝙ she) other cause of thy maladye, and that righte great: Thou haste lefte for to knowē thy selfe what thou art, through whiche I haue plainly founden the cause of thy maladie, or els the entre of recouering of thy heale. For why? For thou art confoūded with foryetynge of thy selfe: For thou sorowdeste that thou art exiled of thy propre goods. And for thou ne wyste what is thende of thinges, for thy demest thou that felonous and wiked men, be mighty and welful: and for thou hast forleten by which gouernementes the world is gouerned, for thy wenest thou ẏ these mutations of fortune fletē without gouernour. These bē the causes not onely to malady, but certes gret causes to deth: But I thanke the actour, and the maker of heale, that nature hath not al forleten the. I haue great nourisshyng of thin heale, and that is the sothe sentence of gouernaunce of the world, that thou bileuest that the gouerning of it is not subiecte ne vnderput to the folie of these happes auenturous, but to the reason of god, & therfore

foze doute the nothing, foz of this litel sparh thine heate of lyfe shall shyne. But foz as moch as it is not time yet of saster remedies, and ỹ nature is of thoughtes thus disceiued that as ofte as they caste awaye sothe opinions, they clothen hem in salse opinions. Of the which salse opinions ỹ derkenesse of pertourbacion wereth vp, that confoundeth the very in sight. And that darkenesse shal I som what assaye to maken thinne and weake, by lyght and meancliche remedies, so that after that the derkenesse of disseiuynge thinges be dooen awaye, thou maye knowe the shyning of very lyght.

Nubibus atris condita nullum fundere possunt sydera lumen. Si mare voluens turbidus auster misceat estum: Vitrea dudum, Parq; serenis. &c.

The sterres couered with blacke cloudes ne mowe yeten adoun no light, if the trouble wynde that hyght Auster, turnynge and walowynge the see medeleth the hete, that is to sayne the boylynge vp from the botome. The wawes that were whylome cleare as glasse, and lyke to the fayze bzight dayes, wythstante anon the syghtes of men, by the sythe and ozdure that is resolued. And the fletyng streme that resseth doune diuersly from high mountaignes is arrested and resisted ofte tyme by the encountryng of a stone, that is departed and fallen from some roche. And foz thy, yf thou wilte loken and deme sothe with clere light, and holden the way with a right path weiue thou ioy, dziue fro dzede, fleme thou hope, ne let no sozow appzoche, that is to sayne: Let non of these four passyons ouercome oz blende the. Foz cloudy and derke is thilke thoughte & bounde with bzidels wher as these thinges reignē.

Explicit liber primus.

Post hec paulisper obticuit, atq; vbi attentionem meam modesta taciturnitate collegit; sic exorsa est. Si penitus egritudinis tuē causas, habitumq; &c.

After this she stinte a litle, and after that she had gadered by a temper stylnesse myne attencion, as who so might sayn thus. After these thynges she stynte a lytell, and whan she apperceiued by a temper stilnesse, that I was ententike to heren her, she begā to spehe in this wise. If I (q she) haue vnderstonden and knowen vtterly, the causes & the habite of thy maladye, thou languishest and art defected foz desire and talent of thy rather foztune. She that ylke foztune onelye that is chaūged as thou fainest to the warde, hath peruerted the clereneſſe and the estate of thy courage. I vnderstonding the felie oz many folde colours and disceites of thilke meruaillous mōstre foztune, and how she vseth ful flateryng familiarite with hem that she enfozceth to begile, so lōg, til that she cōfound with vnsufferable sozow, hē that she hath lese in dispaire vnpurueied. And if thou remembrest well the kinde, the maneres, and the deserte of thilke foztune, thou shalt wel knowe that as in here thou neuer ne hadest, ne haste ylosse anye faire thinge: But (as I trowe) I shal not greatly trauailen to done thee remembren on these thinges. Foz thou were wont to hurtelen and dispisen her with many woozdes, whan she was blandishyng and plesente, and pursuedest her with sentences that weren dzawen oute of myne entre, that is to saye, of mine enfozmacion: but no sodaine mutacion ne betideth not without a maner chaunging of cozages. And so it is befal, that thou arte a lytel departed fro the peace of thy thoughte, but now is tyme that thou dzinke and ataste some softe and delitable thynges, so that whan they bee entred within thee, it mowen make way o strenger dzinkes of medecyns. Come now foz the therfoze the suasion of swetnes rethozien, which that goeth onely the right waie, while she forsaketh not myne estatutes. And with Rhetozike come foz the musyke a damosell of oure house, that singeth nowe lighter modes oz plolacions and now heauier. What eileth the man? what it is that hath caste the in to

Thou

mourning and in to weping? I trowe that thou haste sene some new thing & vncouthe? Thou wenest that fortune be chaunged ayen me, but thou wenest wrōg if that thou wene alway tho bene her maners. She hathe rather kept as to thee warde, her propre stablenesse in the chaunging of her selfe: right soch was she whan she flatterede thee and disceiued the, with vnleful likinges and false wilfulnesse. Thou haste nowe knowen and atteinte the doubtous or double visage of thilk blinde goddesse Fortune. She that yet couereth and wymplethe her to other folke, hath shewed her self euerydele to thee: Yf thou approuest her and thinkest that she is good, vse her maners and plaine the nat, and yf thou agriseste her false trecherye, dispise and caste away her that playeth so harmefully, for she that is now cause of so moch sorowe to thee, shulde be to thee cause of peace & of ioye. She hath forsaken the forsoth, the which that neuer man maie be syker, that she ne shal forsaken him. Glose. But nathelesse some bookes haue the texte thus. Forsothe she hathe forsaken the, ne ther nys no man siker that she ne hath not forsaken. Holdest thou than thylke welefulnesse precious to the that shal passen, and is present fortune dereworth to ẏ, which that nys not faithfull for to dwel, and whan she goth awaye, that she bringeth a wight in sorowe. For sens she may not be with holden at a mannes wyll, she maketh him a wretche whan she departethe fro hym. What other thinge is flyttinge fortune, but a maner shewing of wretchidnesse that is to come. Ne it suffiseth not onely to loken on thing that is presente before the eyen of a man, but wysedom loketh and mesureth thende of thinges, and the same chaungyng from one to another, that is to saine, frō aduersite in to prosperite, maketh that the manaces of fortune ne ben not for to dreden, ne the flateringe to be desired. Thus at laste it behoueth thee to suffren with euen wil in pacience, all that is done within the floore of fortune, that is to saye, in this worlde, sithe thou hast ones put thy necke vnder the yoke of her. For if thou wolt writen a lawe of wending and of dwelling to fortune, which that thou hast chosen frely to ben thy lady: Arte thou nat wrōgful in that, and makest Fortune wroth and asper by thine inpacience, and yet thou mayst nat chaungen her?

Yf thou committest and betakest thy sayles to the wynde, thou shalt be shouen, nat thider that thou woldest, but whider that the wind shoueth the. Yf thou castest thy seedes in the feldes, thou shuldeste haue in minde that the yeres bene amonges otherwhile plentuous, and other while barein. Thou hast betaken thy selfe to the gouernaunce of fortune, and for thy it behoueth thee to ben obeisaunt to the maners of thy lady. Enforcest thou the to aresten or witholden the swyftnesse and the sweygh of her tourning whele? O thou fole of all mortal fooles, if Fortune began to dwel stable, she cessed than to ben Fortune.

Hec cum superba verterit vices dextra, Exestantis more fertur Euripi. Dudum tremendos seua proterit reges, Humilienq; victi subleuat fallax vultum. Non illa dura miseros audit, haud curat fletus.

Whan Fortune wyth a proude righte hand, with tourned her chaunging stounds, she fareth like the maners of the boiling Euripe.

Glosa. Euripe is an arme of the see, that ebbethe and floweth, and some tyme the streme is on o side, and somtime on that other.

Texte. She crewel fortune casteth adoun kynges, that whylom weren ydrade, and she deceiuable enhaunceth vp the humble chere of him that is discomfited: ne she neither hereth ne recketh of wretched wepinges. And she is so hard, that she laugheth and scorneth the weping of hem, the whiche she hathe maked to wepe with her fre will. Thus she playeth and thus she proueth her strengthes, and sheweth a great wonder to al her seruauntes if that a wighte is seen welefull, and ouerthrowe in an houre.

Vellem autem pauca tecum, Fortune ipsius verbis agitare. Tu igitur an ius postulet animaduerti. P. Quid tu o homo ream me agis cotidianis querelis &c.

Certes I wold pleden with the a fewe thynges, vsynge the wordes of fortune: take hede nowe thy selfe, yf that she aske right. O thou man, wherfore makest thou me gyltie by thyn euery dayes plaininges?

What wrong haue I done the? what goodes haue I beraft ẏ that were thyn? Stryue or plete with me before what iuge that thou wylt, of the possessyon, of richesses, or of dignites, and if thou maist shewen me, that euer any mortal manne hath receiued any of tho thinges

thinges to ben his in propre, thā wil I graūt frely, that thilke thinges were thine, which that thou alkest. Whan that nature brought the forth out of thy mothers wombe, I receyued the naked and nedy of all thinges, and I nourished the with al my richesses, and was redy and ententife throughy my fauour to sustaine the: and that maketh the nowe impacient ayenst me. And I enuironned the with al haboundaunce and shinynge of al goodes, that ben in my righte: nowe it lyketh me to with drawe min honde. Thou hast had grace as he that hathe vsed forayne goodes. Thou hastē no right to playne the, as though thou haddest vtterly forlorne al thy thynges. Why plainest thou thanne? I haue done to the no wronge. Rychesses, honours, and soche other thinges ben of my ryght. My seruaūtes knowen me for her lady: they come with me & departen whan I wende. I dare well afferme hardely, that if tho thinges, of whiche thou playnest that thou hast forlorn had ben thin, thou ne haddest not forlorn hem. Shal I thā be defended only to vse my right? Certes it is lefful to the heuen to make clere daies, and after ỹ to ouercome tho same daies with derke nightes. The yere hathe eke leaue to apparaile the visage of the erthe, now with floures, and nowe with fruite, and to confounde hem somtime with raines and with colde.

The see hath eke his right, to ben somtime caulme & blandishinge, with smothe water, and sometime to be horrible with wawes & with tempestes. But couetise of men, ỹ may not be staunched, shall it binde me to be stedfaste, sythen that stedfastenesse is vncouthe to my maners. Soche is my strength, and soche play I play comenly. I turne the whirlinge whele with the turning cerkle, I am glad to chaūgen the lowest to the hyest, and the hiest to the lowest. Worth vp if thou wolte, so it be by this lawe, that thou ne hold nat that I do the wrong, though thou discēde adown, whā the reason of my play asketh it. Wille thou not howe Cresus kyng of Lidiens, of whiche king Cyrus was full sore agaste, a lytel before ỹ this Cresus was caughte of Cyrus, and ledde to the fyre to be brende, but that a rayne discended from heuen ỹ rescowed him? And it is out of mynde howe that Paulus cōsul of Rome, whan he had taken the king of Perciens, weped petously for the captiuite of the selfe kinge? What other thing bewaylen the crienges of tragedies, but onely the dedes of fortune, ỹ with an aukwarde strok ouerturneth the realmes of greate nobleye. Glose. Tragedie is to saine, a ditee of a prosperite for a tyme, ỹ endeth in wretchednesse Lernedest not thou in Grece whan thou wer ponge, that in the entre or in the seeler of Jupiter, there ben couched two tonnes, that one is ful of good, that other is full of harme? What right hast thou to plaine, if thou hast taken more plentously of the good syde, that is to sayne of richesse & prosperite? And what eke if I be not all departed fro ỹ? What eke if my mutabylite yeueth the rightfull cause of hope to haue yet better thiges? Natheles dismaye the not in thy thought. And thou that arte put in the comune realme of al, ne desyre not to lyuen by thin owne proper right.

Si quantas rapidis flatibus incitus Pontus versat arenas . Aut quot stelliferis edita noctibus Celo sidera fulgent: Tātas fundat opes, nec retrahat manum Pleno copia cornu: Humanum miseras haud ideo genus cessset flere querelas, &c.

Though plenty goddesse of riches, hylde adowne wyth a full horne, and with drawe not her hande, as manye richesse as the see turnethe vpwarde sandes, whan it is moued with rauyshinge blastes, or elles as manye rychesses as there shinē bright sterres in the heuen on the sterrynightes: yet for all that mankinde nold not cesse to wepe wretched plaints. And al be it so that god receiued her prayers, and yeueth hem as foole large moche golde, & apparaileth couetous folke with noble or clere honours: yet semeth him haue gottē nothig. But alway cruel rauyne deuouringe al that they haue gotten, sheweth other gapinges, ỹ is to saye, gapen and desiren yet after more rychesses. What brideles might with holden to any certaine ende the disordinate couetise of men, whan euer the rather that it fletethin large yeftes, the more brennethe in hem the luste of hauing? Certes he that quaking and dredefull weneth him selfe nedy, he ne hueth neuermore riche.

His igitur, si pro se tecum, verbis fortuna loquerētur, quid profectō contrahisceres, non haberes. At si quid est, quo querelā tuā iure tuearis, proferas oportet

Therfore if that fortune speake with thee for her selfe in this maner, forsothe thou ne haddest nat what thou mightest answere. And yf thou hast any thinge, wherwith thou mayst rightfully defenden thy complainte, it behoueth the to shewen, and I woll yeuen to the

space

space to tellent it. Boece, Certainli (q I) thā, these ben faire ythinges, and anointed with hony swetnesse of rhetorike and musike, and onely while they ben herde & sowne in eeres, they ben delicious. But to wretches it is a deperfelynge of harme, this is to sain, that wretches felen the harmes that they suffre more greuously, than the remedies or the delites of these wordes may gladden or conforten hem. So that whā these thinges stinten for to sown in eares, that sorow that is inset greueth the thought. P. Right so it dothe (q she). For these ne ben yet no remedies of the malady, but they ben a maner norishinge of thy sorowes, that rebel ayenst thy curacion. For whā tyme is, I shal moue and aiust soch thinges, that precē hem ful depe. But nathlesse, that thou shalt not wilne to leten thy selfe a wretche, Haste thou forieten the numbre & the mamer of thy welfulnesse, I speake not how that the soueraigne men of the citye, toke thee in cure and keping, whan thou were orphelyn of father and of mother and were chosen in affynite of princes of the cite. And thou beganne rather to be lefe and dere than for to be a neighbour, the which thing is the moste precious kinde of any propinquite or aliance that maye ben. Who is it that ne sayde tho that thou ne were righte weleful, with so great nobley as thy fathers in lawe, and with the chastite of thy wyfe, and with thoportunite and noblesse of thy masculine childrē, that is to sayn, thy sōnes. And ouer all thys (me lyste to passen of common thinges) how thou haddest in thy youth dignities, that were warned to old men, but it deliteth me nowe to comon to the singuler vpheapinge of thy welfulnesse. If any frute of mortal thinges may haue any wighte, or price of welefulnesse, myghtest thou euer foryeten for any charge of harme that mighte befal, the remembraunce of thilke daye, that thou saw thy two sonnes made coūsailours, and ladde togyther from thy house, vnder so great assemble of senatours, and vnder the blithnesse of the people: and whan thou saw hem sette in the court in hye chaires of dignities. Thou rhetorien or pronoūcer of kinges praisinges, deseruedest glory of witte and of eloquence, whan thou sittinge bitwene thy two sonnes counsailours, in the place that hight Circo, and fulfilledest the bydding of the multitude of people that was sprade about the with so large praysynge and laude, as men synge in victories. Tho yaue thou to fortune as I trowe, that is to say, tho feoffedest thou fortune with glorious wordes, and deceiuedest her, whan she acoyed & norisheed the as her owne delices. Thou bare away of fortune a yefte, that is to say, soche guerdon that she neuer yaue to priuate mā. Wilt thou therfore laye a rekeninge with fortune? She hath nowe first twyncled vpon ẏ with a wicked eye. If thou consider the nombre and the maner of thy blisses and of thy sorows, thou maist nat forsaken that nart yet blisful. For if therfore thou wenest thy selfe not weleful for tho thīges that semeden ioyful bē passed ther nis not why thou shuldest seme thy selfe a wretch, for thinges ẏ semed now sory, passen also. Art thou now comen a sodayne gest in to the shadow or tabernacle of this life: or trowest thou that any stedfastnesse be in mānes thinges? Whan oft a swifte houre dissolueth the same man, that is to saie, whan the soule departed from the body. For al though that selde is there any faithe that fortunous thynges would dwellen, yet nathelesse the last daye of a mannes lyfe is a maner deathe to fortune, and also to thike that hath dwelt. And therfore what wenest thou dare recke, if thou forlet her in diynge, or els that she fortune forlete the in fleyn awaye.

Cum polo phebus, roseis quadrigis Lucem spergere ceperit, Pallet albentes hebetata vultus Flammis stella prementibus. &c.

Whan Phebus the sonne beginnethe to prede hys clerenesse with rosen Chariottes, thāne the sterre dymmed palethe her white cheres by the flambes of the sonne that ouercommethe the sterre light, that is to sayne whan the sonne is rysen, the daye sterre wexethe pale and leseth her light. For the great lightnesse of the son, when the wode wexeth rodi of rosen floures in the first sōmer ceason, through the breth of the winde zepherus that wexeth warme, if the cloudie wind Auster blowe felliche, than goeth away farinesse of thornes. Oft the see is clere and caulme with mouing floodes, and ofte the horrible wind Aquilon moueth boiling tempeste and ouerwhelueth the see. If the forme of this worlde is so seld stable, & if it turneth by so many enterchaunges: wilt thou than trusten in the tomblyng fortunes of men? Wylt thou trowen on flyttynge goodes? It is certain and establshed by lawe perdurable, that nothing that is engendred is stedfast ne stable

Cum

Tum ego, vera inquam, commemoras ó virtutum omnium nutrix: nec inficiari possum prosperitatis mee velissimum cursum. Sed hoc est, quid. &c.

THen said I thus: O nourice of all vertues, thou saiest ful soth ne I may not forsake the right swift course of my prosperitie, that is to saine, that the prosperitie, ne be comen to me wonder swiftlie and sone. But this is a thynge that greatlie smarteth me, when it remembreth me. For in all aduersities of Fortune, the moste vnselie kynde of contrarious Fortune, is to haue been welefull. Phi. But that thou abiest thus (q she) the tourmente of thy false opinion, that maiest thou not rightfullie blamen, ne aretten to thynges, as who saieth, that thou hast yet many habundances of thynges. Tertus. For all be it so, that the idell name of auenturous welefulnesse, moueth thee now, it is lefull that thou reken with me, of howe many thynges, thou hast yet plentie. And therfore, if that thilke thing that thou haddest for more precious, in al thy richesse of Fortune, be kept to thee, yet by the grace of GOD, vnwemmed and vndefouled: maiest thou then plaine rightfully, vpon the mischief of Fortune, sithen thou hast yet thy best thinges? Certes, yet liueth in good point thilke precious honour of mankinde, Symachus thy wiues father, whiche that is a man made of al Sapience and Vertue, the whiche manne thou wouldest buye, with the price of thyne owne life, he bewaileth the wronges, that menne doen to thee, and not for himself. For he liueth in siker nesse, of any Sentence put ayenst hym. And yet liueth thy wife, that is attempre of witte, and passyng other women, in clēnesse of chastitie. And for I would closen shortlie her bounties, she is like her father: I tell thee, that she liueth lothe of this life, and kepeth to thee onelie her ghoste, and is all mate, and ouercome by wepyng and sorowe, for desire of thee. In the whiche thyng onelie, I mote graunten thee, that thy wilfulnesse is amenused. What shall I saine eke of thy two sonnes counsailours, of which as of children of her age, there shineth the likenesse of the witte of her father, and of her eld father? And sithen the soueraine cure of all mortall folke, is to sauen her owne liues, if thou knowe thy self, thy gooddes make thee more welefull. For yet ben there things dwelled to thee ward, that no man doubteth, that thei ne been more derewor the to thee, then thyne owne life. And for thy drie teares, for yet is not euery Fortune; hatefull to thee ward: ne ouer greate tempest, ne hath not yet fallen vpon thee, when thyne ancres cleuen faste: that neither woll suffren the comfort of this tyme presente, ne the hope of tyme comyng, to passen ne to fallen. Bo. And I praie (q I) that faste mote thei holden: for the whiles that thei holdē, how so euer that thynges been, I shall well fleten forthe and escapen. But thou maiest well seen, how greate apparailes and araie, that me lacked, that be passed awaie frō me. P. I haue somwhat auaunced and furthered thee (q she) if that thou annoie not, or forthinke not of all thy Fortune, as who saieth, I haue somewhat comforted thee, so that thou tempest not thee thus, with all thy fortune, sithen thou hast yet thy beste thinges. But I maie not suffren thy delices, that plainest so weppyng and anguishous, for that ther lacketh somwhat to thy welfulnes For what man is he that is so sad, or of great parfite welefulnesse, that he ne striueth and plaineth, on some halfe ayen the qualitie of his estate? For why, full anguishous thing is the condicion of mannes goodes. For either it cometh not al together to a wight, or els it ne lasteth not perpetuell. For some man hath greate richesse, but he is ashamed of his vngentill linage. And some man is renomed of noblesse of kinrede, but he is enclosed, in so greate angisshe of nede of thynges, that hym were leauer that he wer vnknowe. And some man haboundeth bothe in richesse & noblesse, but yet he bewaileth his chaste life, for he ne hath no wife. And some man is, & selily maried, but he hath no children, and nourisheth his richesses to straunge folk. And some man is gladed with children, but he wepteth full sore, for the trespace of his soonne, or of his doughter. And for this there ne accordeth no wight lighly, to that condicio of his fortune. For al waie to euery mā, there is in somwhat that vnpaiseth, he ne wotte nought, or els he dredeth that he hath assaied. And adde this also, that euery welefull man, hath a full delicate feling: so that but if all thinges befallen at his own will, he is impacīēt, or is not vsed to haue none aduersitie, anon he is throwen adoune for euery little thing. And full little thinges been tho, that withdrawen the cōme or the perfeccion of blisfulnesse, fro hem that been moste fortunate. Howe many men trowest thou, would demen hem self, to been almost in heauen, if thei mighten attain to the

least partie, of the remnaunte of thy fortune? This same place that thou cleapeste exile, is countrey to them that enhabiten here. And for thy nothyng wretched, but whē thou weneste it, as who saith: thou thy self ne no wight elis nis a wretch, but whē he weneth himself he is a wretch, by reputacion of his courage. And ayenward: al fortune is blisfull to a mā, by the agreabilitie, or by the egalitie of hym that suffreth it. What man is that, that is so weleful, that nolde chaungen his estate whē he hath loste his pacience? The sweteneste of mānes welefulneste, is spraynt with many bitternesses. The which welefulneste, although it seme swete & ioiful, to him that vseth it, yet maie it not been with holden, þ it ne goeth awaie when it wol. Then it is well seen, how wretched is the blisfulneste of mortall things that neither it dureth perpetuell with hem, that euery fortune receiuen agreablie or egally, ne it deliteth not in all to hem that been anguisshous. O ye mortall folke, what seeke ye then blisfulneste out of your owne selfe: whiche is put in your self? Errour and folie confoundeth you. I shall shewe thee shortlie the poincte of soueraine blisfulneste.

Is there any thyng to thee, more precious then thy life? Thou wilte answere naie. Then, if it so bee that thou art mightie ouer thy self, that is to saine, by tranquilitie of thy soule, then haste thou thynge in thy power, that thou noldest neuer lesen: Ne fortune maie not bynemme it thee. And that thou maiest knowe that blisfulneste, ne maie not stande in thynges, that been fortunous and temporell, now vnderstande, and gather it together thus. If blisfulneste be the soueraine good of nature, that liueth by reasō: ne thilke thyng is not soueraine good, that maie be taken awaie in any wise.

For more worthie thing is, and more digne thilke thyng, that maie not be taken awaie. Then sheweth it well, that the vnstableneste of fortune, maie not attaine to receiue verie blisfulneste. And yet more ouer, what manne that this tomblyng welefulneste leadeth, either he wote that it is chaungeable, or els he wote it not? And if ye wote it not, what blisfull fortune maie there been in the blindnes of ignorance? And if he wot, that it is chaungeable, he mote alwaie been a dradde, that he ne lese that thyng, that he ne douteth not, but that he maie lesen it. Is who saieth, he mote alwaie be agast, least he lese that, that he woteth right well he maie lese. For whiche the continuell dreade that he hath, ne sufferet hym not to be welefull. Or els if he lese it, he weneth to bee dispised and foreleten. Certes, ehe that is a ful litle good, that is borne with euen harte, when it is loste, that is to saine, that men dooe no more force of the losse, then of the hauyng. And for as mochе as thou thy self arte he, to whom it hath bee shewed, and preued by full many demonstracions, as I wotte well, that the soules of menne, ne mowen not dien in no wise. And ehe sens it is cleare and certaine, that fortunous welefulneste, endeth by the death of the bodie: it maie not be douted, that if death maie take awaie blisfulneste, that all the kind of mortal thyng ne discendeth into wretchednesse, by the ende of death. And sithen we know well, that many a manne hath sought the fruict of blisfulneste, not onely with sufferyng of death, but ehe with sufferyng of paines and tourmentes: howe might then this presente life make men blisfull, sens that thilke self life ended, it ne maketh folke no wretches.

Quisquis volet perennem
Cautus ponere sedem.
Stabiliscp nec sonori
Sterni flatibus Euri,
Et fluctibus minantem.
Curat spernere pontum
Montis cacumen alti,
Bibulas vitet arenas. &c.

What maner of folke, ware and stable, that woll founden hem a pardurable seate, and ne wil not bee caste doune with the loude blastes of the winde Eurus, and will dispise the Sea, menasyng with floudes: Lette hym eschue to builden on the coppe of the Mountaigne, or in the moiste Sandes. For if the fell winde Auster, tourmenteth the coppe of the Mountaignes, with all her strengthes, and the lose sandes, refusen to beare the heauy weightes. And for thy if thou wolte flien the perillous auenture, that is to saie, of the worlde: haue mynde certainlie, to set thyne house of a merie seate in a lowe stone. For all though the wynde troublyng the Sea, Thonder with ouerthrowyng, thou that arte putte in quiete and welefull, by strength of thy Paleis, shalt leade a cleare age, scornynge the woodnesse, and theires of the aire.

Sed

Sed quoniam racionum iam in te mearum fomenta discendunt, paulo validioribus vtendum puto. Age enim. Si iam caduca ac momentaria fortune. &c.

But for as moch, as the nourishynges of my reason, discenden now into thee, I trowe it wey tyme to vsen a litell strenger Medicens. Nowe vnderstande here, all were it so that the yeftes of fortune, ne were not brittle ne transitorie, what is there in hem, that maie be thin in any tyme? Or els that it ne is foule, if that it be looked, and considered perfitlie. Richesses, been thei precious by the nature of them self, or els by the nature of thee? what is moste worthe of richesse? Is it not gold, or might of money assembled? Certes, that gold and that money shineth, and yeueth better renoume to theim that dispenden it, then to thilke folke that mockeren it: for auarice maketh alwaie muckerers to been hated, and largesse maketh folke clere of renome. For sithe that soch thinges as been transferred, from one man to an other: ne maie not dwell with no manne: Certes, then is that money precious, when it is translated into other folke, and stinten to be had by vsage of large yeuyng, of hym that hath yeuen it. And also if all the money that is ouer all, in al the worlde, were gadered toward one man, it should make all other men to bee nedie as of that. And certes, a voice all hole, that is to saine, without amenusyng, fulfilleth together the hearing of moch folk. And when thei been apalled, needes thei maken hem poore, that forgone tho richesses.

O, straite and nedy clepe I these richesses, sens that many folke ne maie not haue it all, ne al ne maie it not comen to one man, without pouertie of all other folke. And the shining of gemmes, that I call precious stones, draweth it not the yen of folke to hemward, that is to saine, for the beautie. But certes, if there were beautie, or bountie in shinyng of stones, thilke clerenesse is of the stones hem self, and not of menne. For whiche I wonder greatlie, that men marueilen on soche thynges. For why, what thyng is it, that if it wāteth mouyng, and ioyncture of soule and bodie, that by right might semen a faire creature, to hym that hath a soule of reason. For al be it so, that gemmes drawen to hem self, a little of the last beautie of the world, through thentent of her creatour, and the distinccion of hem self, yet for as mikell, as thei been put vnder your excellence, thei ne haue not deserued by no waie, that ye should marueilen on hem. And the beautie of fieldes, deliteth it not mikell vnto you?

B. Why should it not deliten vs, sithe that it is a right faire porcion, of the right faire werke, that is to saine, of this worlde? And right so been we gladded somtime, of the face of the sea, when it is cleare: And also marueilen wee on the heauen, and on the Starres, and on the Sunne, and on the Moone. Whi. Appertaineth (q she) any of thilke thynges to thee? why darest thou glorifie thee, in the shinyng of any soche thynges? Arte thou distingued and embelised, by the springyng floures of the first Sommer season? Or swelleth thy plētie in fruictes of Sommer? Why art thou rauished with idle ioies? why embracest thou straunge Goodes, as thei wer thine? Fortune ne shall neuer make, that soche thinges been thyne, that nature of thynges, hath maked forsaine fro thee? Sothe it is, that without doubte, the fruictes of the yearth, owen to be to the norishyng of beastes. And if thou wolt fulfill thy neade, after that it sufficeth to nature, then is it no neade, that thou seke after the superfluitie of Fortune. For with full fewe thynges, and with full little thynges, nature hath her apaied. And if thou wolte achoken the fulfillyng of nature with superfluities: certes, thilke thinges that thou wolt thresten or pouren into nature, shullen been vnioyful to thee, or els anoious. Wenest thou eke, that it bee a faire thing, to shine with diuers clothinges? Of whiche clothing, if the beaute be agreable to loken vpō, I woll marueilen on the nature, of the matter of thilke clothes, or els on the woorke man ꝑ wrought hem. Doeth also a long route of meine, make thee a blisfull man? The whiche seruauntes if thei been vicious of condiciōs, it is a great charge, and distruccion to the hous, and a great enemie to the lorde himself. And if thei been good men, how shal straunge and forain goodnesse, be put in the nomber of thy richesses? So that by all these forsaied thynges, it is clearelie shewed, that neuer one of thilke thinges, that thou accomptedest for thy goodes, nas not thy goed. In whiche thinges, if there bee no beautie to be desired, why shouldest thou be sorie to lese them? Or why shouldest thou reioyce thee to hold hem? For if thei been faire of their own kind, what appertaineth that to thee? For also well shoulden thei haue been faire by themself, though thei wer

departed from al the richesses. For why, faire ne precious wer thei not, for that thei comen emong the richesses. But for thei semed faire and precious, therefore thou haddest leuer reken hem emonges thy richesses. But what desirest thou of fortune, with so greate afare? I trow thou sekest to drive awaie nede, with habundaunce of thynges, but certes, it tourneth you all into the contrarie. For why, certes it nedeth of full many helpinges, to kepen the diuersite of precious hostilementes. And sothe it is, that of many thynges thei haue neede, that many thynges haue. And ayen warde, of little thyng nedeth hym, that measureth his fill, after the nede of kind, and not after outrage of couetise. It is so then, that ye menne haue no proper good set in you, for soche ye moten seeke outwarde, in forain and subiect thinges. So is then the condicion of thinges tourned vp so doun, that a man that is a diuine beast, by merite of his reasō, thinketh that hymselt nis neither faire ne noble, but if it bee through possession of hostilimentes, that ne han no souls, and certes, al other thynges been apaied of her owne beauties: but ye men, that be semblable to god, by your reasonable thought, desirē to aparailen your excellēt kinde of the lowest thinges. Ne ye vnderstanden not how greate a wrong is dooen to your creatour. For he would that mākinde were moste worthie, and noble of any yearthly thing: and ye thresten doun your dignities binethen the lowest thynges. For if that all the good of euery thing be more precious, thā is thilke thing, whose that the good is, sith ye demen that the foulest thynges, been your goodesse: then submitten ye, and put your seluen vnder the foulest thinges, by your estimacion. And certes, this betideth not, without your desert. For certes, soche is the condicion of all mankinde, that onely whē he hath knowyng of it self, then passeth it in noblesse, all other thinges. And when it forletteth, ỹ knowyng of it self, then it is brought benethen all beastes. For why, all other liuing beastes. han of kind to knowen not himself. But whē that men letten the knowyng of hem self, it cometh hem of vice. But how brode sheweth the errour, and the folie of you men, that wenen that any thynge, maie been appareled, with straunge apparelmentes? But forsothe that maie not be doen. For if a wight shineth with thinges that been put to hym: as thus. If thilke thynges shinen with, which a man is apparelled: Certes, thilke thinges been cōmended and praised, with whiche he is apparelled: but natheless, thyng that is couered, and wrapped vnder that, dwelling in his filthe. And I deny that thilke thing be good, that annoieth hym that hath it. Gabbe I of this? Thou wolte saie nate. Certes, richesses haue anoied full ofte hem, that han had tho richesse. Sithe that euery wicked shrewe, is for his wickednesse, the more greadie after other folkes richesses, where so euer it be in any place, bee it golde or precious stones, and weneth hym onely moste worthie that hath hem. Thou then that so busie, dredest nowe the sweard and the speare, if thou haddest entred in the pathe of this life, anoied waifaring man, then wouldest thou sing before the theke, as who saith, a poor man that beareth no richesse on hym by the waie, maie boldly sing before Theues, for he hath not wherof to bee robbed. O precious and right cleare, is the blisfulnesse of mortall richesse, that when thou hasse gotten it, then hast thou lorne thy siskernesse.

Felix nimium prior etas, Contenta fidelibus aruis, Nec inerti perdita luxu. Facilíq; sera solebat Ieiunia soluere glande. Nec bacchia munera norat, Liquido confundere melle, Nec lucida vellera serum, &c.

BLissfull was the first age of mē, thei helden hem apaied with the meates that the true feldes broughten foorthe, thei ne destroied, nor deceiued not hem self without rage, thei weren wonte ligotlie to slaken her hurger at euin, with Akehornes of Okes, thei ne coude not medell the yefte of Baccus, to the cleare Honie, that is to saine, thei could make ne piemente or clarre: Ne thei could not medell the bright fleeces of the Countrey of Seriens, with the benime of Tiry, this is to sain, thei coude not dien white fleces of Syrien Countrey, with the bloode of a maner Shelfishe, that men finden in Tirie, with whiche blood menne dien Purple.

Thei slepten holsome slepes vpō the grasse, and drōken of the rennyng waters, and lien vnder the shadowes of the hie Pine trees. Ne no gesse or straunger, ne carke yet the hie sea, with oores or with shippes, ne thei ne hadden sein yet no newe strondes, to leden Marchandise, into diuers Countreis. Tho weren the cruell clarions full hust, & full still. Ne blood ishad by egre hate, ne had deied yet armures. For where to, or which woodnesse of enemies would

would firste moue armes, when thei sawen cruell woudes, ne none needes be of blood yshad? I would that our tymes should tourne ayen to the old maners. But the anguishous loue of hauyng in folke, burneth more cruelly, then the mountain of Ethna, that ate bréneth. Alas, what was he that firste dalfe vp, the gobbettes or the weightes of golde, couered vnder yerth, and the precious stones, that woulden haue be hidde? He dalfe vp precious perilles, that is to sain, that he that hem first vp dalfe, he dalfe vp a precious perill, for why for the preciousnes of soche thyng, hath many man been in perill.

Quid autem de dignitatibus, potentiaq; differam quas vos, vere dignitatis, ac potestatis insci, cœlo exequatis? Que si inimprobissimũ quemq; ceciderit &c.

BVT what shall I saie of dignities and powers, the whiche ye men that neither knowen verie dignitie, ne verie power, areisen hem as high as the heauen? The which dignities and powers, if thei comen to any wicked manne, thei dooen as greate damages and destruccions, as doeth the flambe of the mountaigne Ethna, when the flambe waloweth vp, ne no deluuy ne dooeth so cruell harmes. Certes, ye remember well (as I trow) that thilke dignitie, that men cleape the Imperie of counsailours, the whiche whilome was, beginnyng of fredome, your elders coueited to haue doen awaie that dignitie, for the pride of the counsailours. And right for that same, your elders before that tyme, had doen awaie out of the Citee of Roome, the Kynges name, that is to saine, thei nolde haue no lenger no king. But now, if so be that dignities and powers, been yeuen to good men, the whiche thyng is full selde, what agreable thynges is there, in tho dignities and powers, but onely the goodnes of folke that vsen hem? And therefore is it thus, that honour cometh not to vertue, bicause of dignitie: and ayenward, honour commeth of dignitie, for cause of vertue. But whiche is thilke your derewoorthy power, that is so clere, & so requirable? O ye yearthly beasties, consider ye not ouer whiche thyng, that it semeth that ye haue power? Nowe, if thou sawe a Mouse, emong other Mise, that chalenged to hym selfwarde, right and power ouer all other Mice, how greate scorne wouldest thou haue of it? Glosa. So fareth it by men, the bodie hath power ouer the bodie: for if thou looke well vpon the bodie of a wight, what thyng shalt thou find more fraile, than is mankinde? The whiche menne full ofte be slaine, by bityng of flies, or els with entring or creping wormes, into the priuities of mannes bodie. But where shall men finden any man, that maie exercisen or hanten any right vpon an other man, but onely on his body, or els vppon thynges, that been lower then the bodie, the whiche I cleape Fortunes possessions? Maiest thou haue euer any commaundement, ouer a free corage? Maiest thou remeue fro thestate of his proper rest, a thought that is cleauyng togither in hymselfe, by stedfaste reason? As whilome a tiraunt wened, to confounde a freman of courage, and wend to cõstrain hym by tourmentes, to maken him discoueren and accusen folke, that wisten of a coniuracion, whiche I cleape a confederacie, that was caste ayenst this tiraunte: but this freman bote of his owne tongue, and caste it in the visage of thilke woode Tiraunte. So that the tourmentes, that this wood tiraunt wende to haue madematter of crueltie: This wise mã made it matter of vertue. But what thyng is it, that a man maie dooe to an other man, that he ne may receiuen theselame thing of other folke in himself? Or thus: what may a man doen to folke, that folke ne maie doen to hym theselame? I haue heard tolde of Busirides, that was wont to sleen his gestes, that herbroden in his hous: and he was slain hym selfe, by Hercules that was his geste.

Regulus had taken in battaile, many men of Affrike, and cast hem into fetters: but sone after, he must yeuen his handes to be bound, with the cheines of hẽ, that he had whilome ouercomen. Weenest thou then, that he bee mightie, that hath power to dooen a thyng, that other ne maie doen in hym, that he hath in other? And yet more ouer, if so were, that these dignitees of powers, hadden any proper or naturell goodnesse in hem, neuer nold thei comen to shrewes. For contrarious thinges, ne been wonte to been ifelowshipped togithers. Nature refuseth that contrarious thynges been ioyned. And so as I am in certaine, that wicked folke haue dignitees ofte tyme, then sheweth it wel that dignitees and powers, ne been not good of her owne kinde, sens that thei suffren hem selfe to cleauen, or ioynen hem selfe to shrewes. And certaine the same thing maie I moste dignely iudgen, and saine of all the yeftes of Fortune, that moste plenteouslie comen to shrewes, of whiche yeftes I trowe, it ought be considered, þ no man

doubteth that he is strong, in whom he seeth strength: and in whom swiftnesse is, sothe it is that he is swifte.

Also Musike maketh Musiciēs, & Phisike maketh Phisiciens, and Rhetorike eke Rhetoriciens. For why, the nature of euery thing maketh his propertie, ne it is not entremedled, with the effecte of contrarious thynges. But certes, richesses maie not restraine auarice vnstanched. Ne power ne maketh not a man mightie ouer hymself, whiche that vicious lustes: holden destrained with chaines, that ne mowen not be vnboundē. And dignitees, that be yeuen to shrewde folke, not onely ne maketh hem not digne: But sheweth rather all openly, that thei been vnworthy and indigne. And it is thus. For certes, ye haue ioye to cleape thinges with false names, that bearen hem in all the Countrey, the whiche names been full oft reproued, by the effecte of thesame thynges. So that these ilke richesses, ne oughten not by right, to bee cleped richesses, ne soche power, ne ought not to bee cleped power, ne soche dignitee, ne ought not to be cleped dignite. And at laste I maie conclude, thesame thyng of all the yeftes of Fortune: In whiche there nis nothyng to be desired, ne that hath in hymself naturell bountie, as it is well iseen, for neither thei ioynen hem not alwaie to good men, ne maken hem alwaie good, to whom thei been ioyned.

Nouimus, quantas dederit ruinas. Vrbe flammata, patribusq; cesis. Fratre qui quondam ferus interempto matris effuso maduit cruore. Corpus & visu gelidum pererrans. Ora non tinxit lachrimis: sed esse. Censor extincti potuit decoris, &c.

I haue well knowen, how many greate harmes and distinctions, were doen by the Emperour Nero. He let brennen the Citee of Roome, and made slea the Senatours, and he cruell whilome slough his brother. And he was made moiste with the bloode of his mother, that is to saie, he lette sleen and slitten the wombe of his mother, to seen where he was conceiued, and he loked on euery halue of her dedde colde body, ne no teare wette his face, but he was so harde harted, that he might be domes manne, or Iudge of her dedde beautie. And natheless, yet gouerned this Nero by scepter, al the people that Phebus maie seen commyng, from his vttereste arisyng, till he hid his beames vnder the wawes, that is to saine, he gouerned all the peoples, by ceptre Imperiall, that the Sunne goeth about fro East to West. And eke this Nero gouerned by ceptre, all the peoples that be vnder the colde sterres, that highten the Septentrions, that is to sain, he gouerned all the peoples, that be vnder the partie of the North. And eke Nero gouerned all the peoples, that the violent wind Nothus shorclith, and baketh the brennyng sandes, by his drie heate, that is to saie, al the peoples in the Southe. But yet ne might not all his power, tourne the woodenesse of this wicked Nero. Alas, it is a greuous fortune, as oft as a wicked sweard, is ioyned to cruell benime, that is to saie, venemous crueltie, to Lordeshippe.

Tunc ego. Sis (inquam) ipsa, minimum nobis ambicionem mortalium rerum fuisse dominatā. Sed materiam gerendis rebus optauimus, quo ne virtus cacita consene sceret. P. Et ila. Atqui hoc vnum est, &c.

Then said I thus. Thou wotest well thy self, that the couetise of mortall thinges, ne hadden neuer lordshippe in me. But I haue well desired matter of thinges to doen, as who saith, I desire to haue matter of gouernaunces, ouer cominalties, for vertue still should not elden: that is to saine, that lest er that he werte old, his vertue that laie now stil, ne shuld not perishe vnexercised, in gouernaunce of commune: for whiche men might speaken or writen, of his good gouernement. Phi. For sothe (q she) and that is a thyng that maie drawen to gouernaunce, soche harts as been worthie and noble of her nature: but nathlesse it maie not drawen, or tellen soche hartes, as been ybrought to the full perfeccion of vertue, that is to saine, couetise of glorie and renome, to haue well administred the common thinges, or doden good desertes, to profite of the common. For se now and consider, how little and how boide of all price is thilke glorie, certain thing is as thou hast learned, by the demonstracion of Astronomie, that all the enuironning of the yearth about, ne halt but the reason of a pricke, at the regard of the greatnesse of the heauen, that is to sain, that if ther were maked, comparison of the yerth, to the greatnes of heauē, men would iudgen in al that ne held no space. Of the whiche little region of this world, the .iiii. part of ỹ yerth is inhabited with liuing beastes ỹ we knowē, as thou hast thy self ilerned by Ptholome ỹ prouetb it.

it. And if thou haddest withdrawen & abated in thy thoughte for thilke fourthe partye, as moche space as the see and ỹ mareis conteynen and ouergone: as moche space as the regiõ of drought ouerstretcheth, that is to sain landes and desertes, well vneth shuld there dwellen a right straite place to the habitaciõ of men. And ye that be enuironned and closed with the lesse pricke of thilke pricke, thinken ye manifesten or publishen your renome and done your name for to ben borne forthe. But your glory that is so narowe & so strayte throngen into so litel boundes, howe mykell conteineth it in larges and in great doynge. And also sette therto, that many a nacion diuers of tonge and of maners, and eke of reason of her lyuinge, ben inhabited in the close of thilke habitacle, the which nacyons what for difficulte of wayes, and what for diuersyte of langage, and what for defaulte of vnusage, and entrecomuninge of marchandyse: not onely the names of singuler men ne may not stretchen, but eke the fame of cities maie not stretchen. At the last, certes in the time of Marcus Tullius, as him selfe wrytte in hys boke that the renom of ỹ cõmon of Rome, ne had not yet passed ne clomben ouer the moũtaine that highte Cancasus, & yet was Rome well waren and redoubted of the Parthes, and eke of other folke enhabyting aboute.

Seest thou not than howe straite and howe compressed is thilke glorie that ye trauailen, aboute to shewen and to moulteplye? Maye than the glory of a synguler Romaine stretchen thider as the fame of the name of Rome maye not clymben ne passen? And eke seest thou not that the maners of diuers folke & her lawes ben discordant amonges hemselfe, so that thilke thing that sum mẽ iudge worthy of prayling, other folke iudgen that, that is worthy of tourment. And herof cometh it that though a man deliteth him in praisyng of his renome, he may not in no wise bringen forthe ne spreden his name to manye maner peoples, and therfore euery man ought to be apaide of his glory, that is published among his owne neyghbours, and thylke noble renome shal be restrained within the boundes of tho maner folke. But howe manye a man that was ful noble in his tyme, hath ỹ wretches and nedy forgetinge of writers put oute of minde and don away, al be it so that certes thilke thinges profiten litel, the which thinges and writinges long and derke elde do away both hem and eke her auctours. But ye menne semen to getten you a perdurabilitie whan ye thinken in time coming your fame shal lasten. But natheless, if thou wilt make comparison to the endlesse spaces of eternite. What thing haste thou, by which thou maist reioycen thee of longe lastinge of thy name? For if there were made comparison of the abyding of a momente to ten thousande winter, for as moche as both the two spaces ben ended, for yet hath the momente some porciõ of it, although it be litel. But natheless thilke selfe nombre of yeres, and eke as many yeres as therto may be multiplied, ne may not certes be cõparisoned to the perdurabilite that is endeles. For of thinges whiche that haue ende maye be made comparison, but of thinges which that ben withouten ende, to thinges that haue ende, may be maked no cõparison. And for thy is it that although renome as of long tyme, as euer the lifte to thinken, wer thought, to ỹ regard of the eternite, that is vnstaunchеable & infinite, it ne should not onelie seme littel, but plainlie right nought. But ye semẽ certes ye can do nothing a right but if it be for the audience of the people, and for yle rumours. And ye forsaken the great worthinesse of conscience and of vertue, and ye seken your guerdons of the smale wordes of straunge folke. Haue nowe here and vnderstande in the lightnesse of soche pride and veine glory, howe a man shorned festynally and merily soche vanite. Whylom there was a man that had assayed with stryuynge wordes an other mã, the which not for vsage of very vertue, but for proude vayne glorye, had taken vpon him falsely ỹ name of a philosophre. This rather man that I speake of, thought he wold assay, wheder he thilke wer a philosophre or no, that is to saye: yf that he woulde haue suffred lightlye, in pacence, the wronges that were done to him. This fained philosophre toke pacience a litell while: and whan he had receiued wordes of outrage, he as in striuinge ayen & reioysing of him selfe, sayde at laste thus. Vnderstandest thou not, that I am a philosophre? That other mã answerde againe bitingly and said: I had welt vnderstand it, if thou haddest holdẽ thy tong stil. But what is it to these noble worthy mẽ for certes of soch folk speke I that sekẽ glorie with vertue? What is it (ỹ she) what attey neth fame to soch folke, whan the body is resolued by the deth at the last? for if so be that men dien in al. that is to say body and soule, the which thing oure reason defendeth vs to

byleue: than is there no glory in no wise.
For what shulde thilke glory be, whan he, of whom thilke glorie is saide to be, nys ryght naught in no wyse. And yf the soule whiche that hath in it selfe scīece of good werkes, vnbounden frō the prison of the yerth, wendeth frely to the heuē, dispiseth it not than al erthly occupacion, and beinge in heuen reioyseth that it is exempte from al erthly thynges: as who saith, thā recketh the soule neuer of no glory of renome of this world.

Quicumq; solam mente precipiti petit, summumq; credit gloriam, Lace patentes etheris cernat plagas, Artumq; terrarum situm, Breuē replere non valentis ambitum. &c.

Who so that wyth ouerthrowinge thoughte onely seketh glori of fame, and weneth that it be soueraine good, let him loken vpon the brode shewing countreis of the heuen, and vpon the strayte seete of this erthe, and he shal be a shamed of thencrease of his name, that maye not fulfil the litel compas of the erthe. O what coueyten proude folke to liften vp her neckes in vole, in the deedly yoke of thys worlde? For all though that renome yspradd passyng tofore peoples, goth by diuers tonges, and although great houses of kinredes shynen by clere tytles of honours, yet natheless deth dispiseth al high glory of fame, and deth wrappeth togithers the high heedes & the lowe, and maketh equal & euen the hyest with the lowest.

Where wōnen now the bones of trew Fabricius? What is nowe Brurus, or sterne Caton? The thynne fame yet lastyng of her vole names, is marked with a few letters. But al though that we haue knowen the faire wordes of ỹ fame of hem, it is not yeuen to know hem that be deed and cōsumpt. Liggeth thā styl al vtterlye vnknowable, ne fame ne maketh you not knowe. And yf ye wene to lyue the lenger for winde of youre mortall name, whan one cruel day shal rauisshe you: than is the seconde dwellyng to you close. The first dethe he clepeth here the departing of ỹ body and the seconde dethe here the stintyng of the renome of fame

Sed ne me in exorabile contra fortunam gerere bellum putes, est aliquando, cum de hominibus: fallax illa non nihil bene mereatur: tū scilicet cum se aperit, &c,

But for as moch as thou shalt not wenen (q she) that I beare an vntretable batayle ayenst fortune, yet somtims it befalleth that she (disceiuable) deserueth to haue ryght good thanke of men: and that is whan she her selfe openeth, & whan she discouereth her front, and sheweth her maners. Peraduēture yet vnderstandest thou not that I shall say. It is a wonder that I desire to tell, and therfore vnneth may I vnpliten my sentēce with wordes. For I deme that contrarious fortune profiteth more to men than fortune debonayre. For alway whan fortune semeth debonayre, thā she lieth falsely, biheting the hope of welfulnesse. But forsoothe cōtrarious fortune is alwaye sothfaste, whan she sheweth her selfe vnstable thrrough her chaungyng. The amiable fortune disceiueth folke: the contrary fortune leacheth. The amiable fortune blideth with the beautie of her false goodes, the yertes of folkes that vsen hem. The contrarie fortune vnbindeth hem with the knowyng of freele welefulnesse. Thamyable fortune maiste thou sene alway wyndy and flowyng, & euer misknowing of her self. The cōtrary fortune is attempre and restrayned and wyse, thorowe exercise of her aduersyte. At the laste amiable fortune with her flaterynges draweth myswandryng men fro the soueraine good: the contrarious fortune leadeth ofte folke ayen to sothefaste goodes, & halteth hem ayen as with an hoke. Wenest thou than that thou oughtest to leten this a lytel thing, that this aspre and horrible fortune hath discouered to the, the thoughts of thy trew frendes? For why, this ilke fortune hath departed and vncouered to the both the certaine visages, and eke the doutous visages of thy felawes. whā she departed away fro the, she toke away her frendes and last the thy frendes. Nowe whan thou were riche and welefull, as the semed, with howe mykel woldest thou haue bought the full knowing of this, that is to sayne, the knowing of thy very frendes? Nowe plaine the not than of richesse lorne, sithe thou haste foūd the moste precious kynd of richesse, that is to saine, thy very frendes.

Quod modus stabili fide, Concordes variat vices, Quod pugnancia semina, Fedus perpetuū tenent, &c.

what

That the worlde w̄ stable faithe varieth accordable chaungynges, that the contrarious qualytees of Elementes holden amonge hem selfe alyaunce perdurable, that Phebus the sōne with his goldē chariot bringeth forth the rosy day, that the moone hath cōmaundement ouer the nightes: which nightes Esperus the euen sterre hath, that the sea gredy to flowen constraineth with a certain ende his floodes, so that it is not lefull to stretch his brode termes or boundes vpon the yearth: al this ordinaūce of thynges is boundes with loue, that gouerneth erthe and see, and also hath commaundement to the heuen. And yf this loue slaked the bridels, al thinges that now louen hem togithers wolden make bataile contynuelly, & striuen to fordone the facion of this world, the which they now leden in accordable faith, by faire mouynges. This loue holdeth togider people ioyned w̄ an holy bond, and knitteth sacrament of mariage of chast loues. And loue endeth laws to true felaws. O welefull were makinde if thilke loue that gouerneth the heuē, gouerned your corages.

¶ Here endeth the seconde boke and here feloweth the thirde.

Iam cantum illa finierat, cum me audiendi auidum, stupentemq; arrectis adhuc auribus carminis mulcedo defixerat. Itaq; paulo post, O inquam summum lassorum solamen animorum, quantum me. &c.

By this she had ended her songe: whā the swetnesse of her dyte had through percedde me, that was desyrous of herkenynge. And I astonyed had yet streyght mine eares, that is to saine, to herken the bet what she shuldsay, so that litel here after I sayd thus. O thou that art souerain cōfort of corages anguisshous, so thou hast remounted & nourisshed me with the weight of thy sentences, an with delite of singyng, so that I trowe not that I be vnperegall to the strokes of fortune: as who saith, I dare wel now suffren al thassautes of fortune, and well defende me from her. And tho remedies, which that thou saidest here beforne, ẏ weren right sharpe, not onelye that I am not agrisen of hem nowe, but I desyrous of hearyng, aske greatly to hearen the remedies. Than saied she thus. That feled I well (q̄ she) whan that thou ententife and styl, rauysshedest my wordes: and I abode tyll thou haddest soche habyte of thy thought, as thou hast now, or els tyll that, I my selfe had maked it to the same habite, whiche that is a more very thyng. And certes the remenaūt of things that ben yet to say ben soch, that first whan men taste hem, they bene byting: But whan they bene receiued within a wight, thā ben they swete. But for thou saist that thou art so desyrous to hearken hem, with how greate brennyng woldest thou glowē, if thou wistes whider I wolde leden the? B. Whider is that (q̄ I) P. To thilke verie blissfulnesse (q̄ she) of whiche thine hart dremeth. But for as moche as thy sight is occupied & distourbed of erthly thinges, thou maiest not yet sene thilke self welefulnesse. B. Doe (q̄ I) and shewe me what thilke very welfulnes is, I pray the without tarieng. P. That wol I gladly done (q̄ she) for cause of thee. But I wol first marken by wordes, & I wil enforcē me to enforme the thilke false cause of blissfulnesse, whiche that thou more knowest: so that whan thou hast beholden thilke false goodes, and turned thin iyen so to that other syde, thou maye knowen the clerenesse of very blyssfulnesse

Qui serere ingenuum volet agrum, Liberat arua priùs fruticibus; Falce rubos, filicemq; resecat. &c.

Who so woll sowe a felde plenteous, let him firste deliueren it of thornes, and kerue a sonder with his hoke the bussches and the ferne, so that the corn may commen heuie of eres & of greines. Hony is the more swete if mouths haue firste tasted sauours that be wycke. The sterres shinen more agreably whan the wynde Nothus letteth his plungi blastes. And after that Lucifer the day sterre hath chased a way the darke nyght, the day the fairer ledeth the rosen horse of the sonne And right so thou, beholdyng first the false goodes begyn to withdrawe thy necke fro the yearthly affeccions, and afterwardes the very goodes shullen entren into thy corage.

Tum defixo paululū visu, & velut in angustā sue mētis sedē recepta: sic cepit. P. Omnis mortaliū cura quam multiplicium studiorum lalabor exercet. &c.

The

Tho fastened she a litel the syght of her eien, & she withdrew her, right as it wer into the strayte secte of her thought, and begā to speake right, thus. Al the cures (quod she) of mortal folk, which that trauailen hem in many maner studies, gon certes by diuers waies: but nathels they enforcen hem all to comen onely to thende of blisfulnes. And blisfulnes is soche a good, that who so hath gotten it, he ne maye ouer that thing more desire. And thys thyng forsoth is so soueraine good, that it conteineth in him selfe al maner of goodes, to the which good if there failed any thing, it myghte not ben soueraine good, for than were some good out of this soueraine good, that might be desyred. Nowe is it clere and certaine, that blisfulnesse is a parfyte state, by the congregacion of all goodes, the whiche blisfulnesse (as I haue sayd) al mortal folke enforcen hem to gette by diuers waies. For why, the couetise of euery good is naturelli planted in the hertes of men: but the miswādryng errour, misledeth hem in to false goodes. Of the whiche men, some of hem wenen that soueraine good be to liuen without nede of any thinge. And other men demen, ỳ soueraine good be right digne of reuerence, and enforcē hem to be reuerenced amonge her neighbours, by the honours that they haue goten. And some folke there ben that holden ỳ right hye power be soueraine good, and enforcen hem for to reignen, or els to ioynen hem to hem that reignē. And it semeth to other folke, that noblesse of renome be the soueraine good, and hastē hem to getten hem glorious name by the artes of werre or of peace. And many folke mesuren and gessen, that soueraine good be ioye and gladnesse, and wenen that it be right blisful thing to plongē in voluptuous delites. And therebene some folke, that entrechaungē the causes and the endes of these forsaide goods: As they that desyren richesses to haue power and delites, or elles they desyre power for to haue money, or for cause of renome. In these thynges and soche other is turned all the entencion of desyrynges and werkes of men, as thus: Noblesse and fauoure of people, which that yeueth to all menne, as it semeth hem, a maner clerenesse of renomme, and wife and children, that men desyren, for cause of delyte and merynesse. But forsoth frendes ne shullen not be rekened amonge the goodes of fortune, but of vertue, for it is a ful holy manner thing. All these other thinges, forsoth be taken for cause of power, or elles for cause of delite. Certes now am I redy to referren the goodes of the body, to these forsayd thynges abouen: for it semeth that strength and gretnesse of body yeuen power and worthynesse, and that beaute and swiftnesse yeuen glorye and renome: and helth of body semeth to yeuen delite. In al these thinges it semeth only that blysfulnesse is desyred: for why, thylke thyng that euery man desireth moste ouer al thinges, he demeth that it be soueraine good. But I haue defined, that blisfulnesse is soueraine good, for whyche euery wight demeth ỳ thilke estate that he desireth ouer al thinges that it be blisfulnesse. Nowe hast thou than before thin eyen almoste al ỳ purposed forme of the welefulnesse of mankynde, that is to saine, richesse, honours, power, glorie and delites, the which delite only considred he Epicurus, and iudged and establisshed that delite is the soueraine good: for as moche as all other thinges: as him thought, byreft awaye ioy and mirthe from the hart. But I returne againe to the studies of men, of whiche men the corage alway reherseth and seketh the soueraine good, al be it so that it be with a dyrked memorie, but he note by whiche pathe, right as a dronken man note nought by whiche pathe he may returne home to his house. Semeth it than that folke forleyen and erren to enforcen hem to haue nede of nothing. Certs there is none other thing, that may so moche performen blisfulnesse, as an estate plēteous of al goodes, that ne hath nede of none other thing, but that is sufisaūt of him selfe vnto him self. And folien soch folke than that wenen, that thilke thig that is right good, that it is eke right worthy of honor & of reuerēce: certes nay. For that thinge nys neither foul ne worthy to be dispised, that wel nigh al the entencion of mortal folke trauailen to get it And power eke ought not to be rekened amōges goodes. What els: for it nis not to wene, that thilke thing that is moste worthy of all thinges, be feble and without strength. And clerenesse of renome, ought that to ben dispised: Certes ther may no man forsake, that al thinge that is right excellent and noble, that it ne semeth be right clere & renomed. For certes it nedeth not to sai, that blisfulnesse be anguishous ne drerye, ne subiect to grevaunces ne sorowes, sens that in right lytel thinges folke seken to haue and to vsen that may delyten hem. Certs these ben the thinges that

men

men willen & desiren to getten: and for this cause desirē thei richesses, dignities, reignes, glorie, and delites. For therby wenen they to haue suffisaūce, honoure, power, renomme, and gladnesse. Than is it good, that men seken thus by so many diuers studies, in whyche desire, it many not lightely be shewed, howe great is the strengthe of nature. For howe so men haue diuers sentences and discordinges, algates men accorden all in louinge the ende of good.

Quantas rerum flectit habenas Natura potens, quibus immensum, Legibus orbem prouida seruet, Stringatq; ligans irresoluto, Singula nexu, placet arguto, fidelibus lentis promere cantu. &c.

IT lyketh me to shewe by subtyll song, with slacke and delitable sowne of stringes, howe that nature mightelie enclineth and fliteth by the gouernement of thinges, & by soche lawe she purueiable kepeth he great worlde, an howe she bindynge restrainethe all thynges by a bonde that maie not be vnbounden. All be it so that the lions of the countreye of Pene, beren the faire chaines, and takē meates of the handes of folke, that yeuen it hem, and dreden her sturdie maisters, of whiche they be wont to suffre beatinges, yf that her horrible mouthes ben bledde, that is to sain, of beestes deuoured: her corage of time passed that hath been idle & rested, repaireth ayen, and thei roren greuously, and remembren on her nature, and slaken her neckes from her chaines vnbounde, and her maister firste to torne with blody teth, assayeth ẏ woode wrathes of hem, that is to saine, thei fretten her maister. And the ianglyngbirde that singeth on the hye braunches, that is to saine, in the wodde, and after is enclosed in a straite cage all though the plienge besinesse of men yeue hem honied drinkes, and large meates with swete study: yet natheles if thilke birde skipping out of her straite cage, seeth the agreable shadowes of ẏ wodes, she defouleth with her feete her meate ishad, and seketh on morning onely the woode, and twirethe desiring the woode with her swete wise. The yerde of a tre that is haled adowne by migtie strēgth boweth redily the croppe adown: but if that the hande that is bente let it gone againe, anon the croppe loketh vpright to the heuen. Thei sonne Phebus that falleth at euen in ẏ westren wawes, returneth aien eftsones his carte by a priuy pathe there as it is wonte arise. Al thinges sekē ayē to her proper course and al thinges reioysen on her returning againe to her nature: ne none ordinaunce is betaken to thinges, but that hath ioyned the ende to the beginninge, and hath made the course it selfe stable, that it chaunge not fro his proper kinde.

Vos quoq; o terrena animalia, tenui licet imagine, vestrum tamen principium somniatis. Verumq; illum beatitudinis finen, licet minime perspicaci. &c.

CErtes also ye men ẏ ben erthly beastes dreamen alwaye your begīning, although it be with a thin imaginaciō, & by a maner thought, al be it nat clereli ne perfetly, ye lokē frō a ferre to thilke veri fine of blissfulnes, And therfore naturel entencion leadeth you to thilke very good, but many maner errours mistourneth you therfro. Cōsider now if ẏ be thilke thinges, by which a man weneth to get hī blissfulnesse if that he may comen to thilke ende ẏ he weneth to come to by nature. For if ẏ money honours, or these other forsaid thinges bringen men to soch a thing that no good ne faile them ne semeth to faile: Certes than wold I graūt that they be maked blissful by thinges that they haue gottē. But if so be that thilke thinges ne mowē not performe that thei byheten, and that there be defaut of many goodes, sheweth it not than clereli ẏ false beaute of blissfulnesse is knowen & atteint in thilke thīges? First and forward thou thy self, that haddest haboundaūce of richesse nat longe agon, I aske the ẏ in thaboundance of al thilk riches, if thou were neuer anguishous or sorie in thy courage of any wrong or greuaūce that betyd the in any syde. B. Certes (q̄ I) it ne remembrethe me not, that euer I was so fre of my thought, that I ne was alwaye in anguishe of somwhat. P. And was that not (q̄ she) for that the lacked somwhat that thou noldest not haue lacked? Or els thou haddest that thou noldest haue had? B. Right so it is (q̄ I) P. Than desirest thou ẏ presence of the one, and thabsence of that other? B. I graūte well (q̄ I) Phi. Forsothe (q̄ she) than nedeth there somwhat that euery man desireth. B. Ye there nedeth (q̄ I) P. Certes (q̄ she) and he that hath lacke or neede of aught, nis not in euery way suffisaūt to himself. B. No (q̄ I) P. And thou (q̄ she) in all the plente of thy richesse haddest thilke lacke of suffisaunce? B. What els (q̄ I) P. Than may not riches maken

ken that a man nis nedi, ne that he be sufficient to him selfe: and yet that was it that they beheten as it semed. And eke certes I trowe that this be greatlie to consider, that money hath not in his owne hynde, that it ne maie been binomed of hem, that haue it maugre hem. Boecius. I knowe it well (q I). Philo. Why shouldest thou not beknowen it (q she) when euery daie the strenger folke, benomen it from the feobler maugre hem: from whēs come els, all these foraine complaintes, quarels, or pleadynges, but for that menne aske her money, that hath been binomed hem, by strength or by gile, and alwaie maugre hem? Boecius. Right so it is (q I). Philosophie. Then hath a man neede (q she) to seeken hym foraine helpe, by whiche he maie defende his money. Boecius. Who maie saie naie (q I). Philosophie. Certes (q she) and hym needed none helpe, if he ne had no money, that he might lese. Boecius. That is doubtles (q I) Philosophie. Then is this thyng tourned in to the contrary (q she) for richesse, that menne wemen, should maken suffisaunce, thei maken a man rather haue nede of forain helpe. Whiche is the maner or the gise (q she) that richesse maie driuen awaie nede? Riche folke maie thei neither haue honger ne thurste? These riche menne, maie thei fele no colde on their limes in Winter? But thou wilte aunswere, that riche menne haue inough, wherwith thei maie staunchen her honger, and slaken her thurst, and doen awaie colde.

In this wise, maie neede been coumforted by richesse, but certes: neede ne maie not all vtterlie be doen awaie. For if this nede, that al waie is gaping and gredy, be fulfilled with richesse, and any other thynge, yet dwelleth then a nede, that mote be fulfilled, I hold me still, and tell not how that little thyng, suffiseth to nature: but certes, to auarice suffiseth not inough of nothyng. For sine that riches, ne maie not all dooen awaie neede, and thei maken their owne neede: what maie it then bee, that ye wenen that richesses, mowen yeuen you suffisaunce?

Quamuis fluente diues auri gurgite. Non expleturas cogat auarus opes. &c.

ALL were it so, that a noble coueitous manne had a Riuer, or a Gutter fletyng al of Gold, yet should it neuer staunche his coueitise: and although he had his neche charged, with precious stones of the redde Sea: And though he dooe ere his fieldes plenteous, with an hundred Oxen, neuer ne shall his bityng busines forleten hym, while he liueth, ne the light richesses, ne shall not bearen hym compaignie when he is dedde.

Sed dignitatis honorabilent, reuerendumq; cui prouenerint, reddunt. Num vis ea est magistratibus, vt vtentium mentibus virtutes inserant, vicia depellant. &c.

But dignities to whome they be comen, maken they hym honorable and reuerent? Haue they not so great strēgth that thei maie puttē vertue in hertes of folkes that vsē the lordship of hem, or els may they don away the vices. Certes they be not wont to don away wickednes, but they be wont rather to shew wickednesse. And therof cometh it that I haue right great disdain, that dignities ben yeuen to wicked men. For whiche thing Catullus cleped a cōsul of Rome (that highte Nonius) postome of boche, as who saith, he cleped him a congregacion of vices in his brest, as a postome is full of corrupcion: All were Nonius set in a chaire of dignite. Seest thou not thā, how greate vilonies dignities done to wiked men? certes vnworthinesse of wicked men shulde be the lasse sene, if they nere remoued of non honour. Certes thou thy self ne mightest not be brought with as many perils as thou myghtest suffre, that thou woldest beare the magistrate with decorate, that is to saine, that for peril that myght befali thee by offence of the king. Theodorike, thou noldest not be felawe in gouernaunce with Decorate, whan thou saw that he had wicked corage of a lycorous shrew and of an accusour. Ne I may not for soche honours iudgen hem worthy of reuerēce, that I deme and hold vnworthy to haue thylke same honours. Now if thou sawe a manne, that wer fulfilde of wisedome, certes, thou ne mightest not deme, that he wer vnworthie to that honour, or els to the wisedome of whiche, he is fulfilled. Boecius. No (q I). Philosophie. Certes (q she) dignities appertainen properlie to vertue, and vertue transporteth dignitie anon to thilke man, to whiche she her self is conioyned. And for as moche as honours of people, ne maie not make folke digne of honour, it is well seen clerely, that thei ne haue no proper beautie of dignitie. And yet menne oughtē take more heede in this: for if a wight be in so moche the more outcast, that he is dispised

spised of moste folke, so as dignite ne maye not maken shrewes worthy of no reuerence, than maketh dignite shrewes rather dispised then praised, the which shrewes dignite sheweth to moch folke. And forsothe not vnpunished, that is to sayn, that shrewes reuengē hem ayenward vpon dignities. For they yelden ayen to dignities as greate guerdons, whan they dispotten and defoulen dignities with her vilonie. And for as moche as thou nowe knowest, that thilke very reuerence ne maye nat comen by these shadowy transitorye dignities, vnderstonde nowe thus: that if a man had vsed and had many maner dignities of consuls and were parauēture comen amonge straunge nacions, shulde thilke honour maken him wurshipfull and redouted of straunge folke? Certes if that honour of people were a naturel yefte to dignities, it ne might neuer cessen no where amonge no maner folke to done his office. Right as a fyre in euery countrey ne stinteth not to enchaufen and maken hote. But for as moche as for to ben honorable or reuerēt, ne cometh not to folke of her proper strength of nature, but onely of the false opinion of folke, that is to saine, that wenen that dignities maken folke digne of honours: anone therfore whā they comen ther as folke ne knowē not thilke dignities, her honours vanishen awaye and that anon. But that is amōge straunge folke maist thou sain. Ne amonges hem ther they were borne, ne dured not thilke dignities alwaye. Certes the dignite of the prouostry of Rome was whilom a great power: nowe is it nothinge but an ydle name, and the rente of the senatorie a great charge. And if a wight whilom had thoffice to taken hede to the vitailes of the people, as of corne and of other thinges, he was holdē amonges hem great. But what thing is more now out caste than thilke prouostrie. As I haue said a lytel here beforene, that thilke thing that hath no proper beaute of it self, receiueth sometime price and shining, and sometime leseth it by thopinion of vsaunces. Now if that dignities thā ne mowe not make folke digne of reuerence, and if that dignites were soule of her wyll, by the fylthe of shrewes. And yf dignities lesen her shininge by chaungynge of tymes, and yf they weren soule by estimaciō of people, what is it that they han in hem selfe of beaute, ỹ ought to be desired? as who saithe none: than ne mowē they yeuēn no beaute of dignitie to none other.

Quamuis se tyrio superbus ostro. Comeret ci niueis lapillis. &c.

ALbeit so, that the proude Nero wyth all his wode luxure, kēbe him and apparelled him with faire purpure of Tire, a with white peerles. Algates yet therof he hateful to al folk that is to say that all was he behated of all folkes, yet this wicked Nero had great lordshippe. And yafe whilome to ỹ reuerent Senatours the vnworshypfull seates of dignities. Vnworshipfull seates he clepeth here, for that Nero that was so wicked yafe the dignities.

Who woulde than resonablye wenen, that blisfulnesse were in soche honours, as been yeuen by vicious shrewes

An vero regna, regnumq; familiaritas efficere potentem valent? Quidni. &c.

VTreignes and familiarities of kynges, maie thei maken a man to ben mighty? Howe is: when his blisfulnesse durethe perpetuallie. But certes, the olde age of time passed, & ehe of present time nowe, is ful of ensamples, how that kinges haue chaunged in to wretchednesse, out of her welfulnes. O, a noble thing & a clere thinge is power, that nis not founden mighty to kepe it self. And if that power of realmes be authour and maker of blisfulnesse, if thilke power lacketh on any syde, amenuseth it nat thilke blisfulnesse, and bringeth in wretchednes? But yet al be it so, that the realmes of manhinde stretchen brode, yet mote ther nede ben moche folke, ouer whiche that euerything ne hath no lordshipe ne commaūdement. And certes vpon thilke side that power falleth, which that maketh folke blisful. Right on that same side no power entreth vnderneth that maketh hem wretches. In this maner than motē kinges haue more porcion of wrecchednesse thā of welfulnesse.

A tiraunt that was kinge of Cecyle, that had assayed the perill of his estate, shewed by similitude the dredes of realmes by gastenesse of a swerde, that honge ouer the heed of his familier. What thinge is than this power, that maye not done awaye the bitynges of besinesse, ne eschewe the prickes of drede?

And certes yet wolden they lyuen in syker nesse, but they maye nat. And yet they glorifyen hem in her power. Holdest thou than that thilke mā be mighty, ỹ thou seest that he

wolde done that he maye not done: And holdest thou than him a mighty man, that hath enuironed his sydes with men of armes or sergeauntes, and dredeth more hem that he maketh agast, than they dreden hym, and that is putte in the handes of his seruaunts for he shulde seme mightye? But of kamylyeres or seruauntes of kinges, why shulde I tell the any thing, sithe that I my selfe haue shewed the that realmes hem selfe ben ful of great feblesse: The whiche kamylyers, certes the royall power of kinges in hoole estate, and in estate abated, full ofte throwethe adowne.

Nero constrained Seneche hys kamylyer and hys mayster, to chesen on what dethe he wolde dye. Antonius commaunded that knightes slowen wyth her swerdes Papinian his kamylyer, whiche Papinian hadde ben longe tyme, ful mighty amonges hem of the courte. And yet certes, they wolden both haue renounced her power. Of whiche two Seneche enforced him to yeuen to Nero his richesse, and also to haue gone in to solytary exile. But whan the great weight, that is to sain, of lordes power, or of Fortune, draweth hem that shullen fall, neither of hem ne might do that he wolde. What thinge is than thylke power, that thoughe men haue it, yet they ben agast, and whan thou woldest haue it, thou narte not syker: And yf thou woldest forleten it, thou maist nat eschewen it. But wheder soch men ben frendes at nede as be counsayled by fortune, and nat by vertue: Certes soch folke as welful fortune maketh frēdes, cōtrarious fortune maketh hem enemyes. And what pestilence is more mightye for to anoye a wight, than a familier enemye:

Qui se volet esse potentem, Animos domet
ille feroces, Nec victa libidine colla. &c.

Who so wol be mighty, he mote daunten his cruell corages, ne put nat his necke ouercomen, vnder the foule raynes of lechery. For all be it so, that the lordshippe stretche so ferre that the coūtrey of Inde quarketh at thy cōmaundementes, or at thy lawes. And that the last yle in the see, that hyght Tyle, be thyrale to the: yet yf thou maiste nat putten away thy foule derke desyres, and dryuen out fro the wretched complayntes: Certetes, it nys no power that thou hafte,

Gloria vero quam fallax sepe, quā turpis est
Vnde non iniuria tragicus exclamat,
O gloria gloria millibus mortaliū nihil aliud
facta, nisi aureum inflatio magna. &c.

But glorie, how deceiuable and howe full is it oft? For whiche thing, not shilfully a tragedie, that is to sayne maker of dites that highten Tragedyes, cried and sayde. O glory glory (ye) thou nart nothinge els to thousandes of folks but a sweller of eares. For many haue full great renome by the falle opinion of the people.

And what thinge may ben thought fouler then soche prayfynge: For thinke folke that ben praised falsly, they mooten nedes haue shame of her praisinge. And yf that folke haue getten hem thanke or praisinge by her desertes: what thing hath thilke prise eched or encreased to the conscience of wyse folke, that mesuren her good, nat by the rumoure of the people, but by the sothefastenesse of cōscience? And if it seme a faire thinge, a man to haue encreased and spread his name, than followeth it, ỹ it is demed to ben a foule thig. if it ne be yspradde and encreased. But as I said a litel here before, ỹ sithe there mote nedes ben many folkes, to whiche folke the renome of a man ne maye nat comen, it befalleth, that he that thou wenest be glorious & renomed, semeth in the next part of ỹ perthes to ben without glorye and without renome. And certes amōges these thinges I ne trow nat that the prise and the grace of the people, nys neither worthy to ben remembred, ne cometh of wise iugement, ne is ferme perdurably. But now of this name of gētilesse: what man is it that ne may wel sene howe vaine & how flityng it is: For if ỹ name of gentilesse be referred to renome & clerenesse of lynage, than is gentil name but a forain thing, that is to say, to hem ỹ glorifiē hem of her linage For it semeth that gentiles be a maner praysing that cometh of ỹ desertes of auncestors. And if praising maketh gentilnesse, than motē they nedes ben gentil, that been prayfed. For whiche thinge it folowethe, that if thou ne haue no gentylnesse of thy selfe, ỹ is to saine, prise, that cometh of thy desert. For aine gentilnesse ne maketh the nat gentil. But certes if there be any good in gentilnesse, I trowe it be al onely this: that it semeth as that a maner necessite be imposed to gentilmē, for that they

they ne shulde nat outragen or forleauen fro the vertues of her noble kynred.

Omne hominum genus in terris Simili surgit ab hortu. Vnus enim rerum pater est. Vnus cuncta ministrat, &c.

ALl the lynage of men, that ben in erth bē semblable of birth. One alone is father of thynges: one alone ministreth all thinges: he yaf to the sun his beaumes: he yaf to the moone her hornes: he yafe to mē the erth: he yafe the sterres to the heuen: he closed with membres the soules that camen from his hye seate. Than comen all mortall folke of noble seed. Why noisen ye, or bosten of your elders? For yf ye loke your beginning and god youre father authour and your maker. Than nys there no forelyued wight or vngentill but yf he nourishe his corage vnto vices, and forlete his proper byrthe

Quid autem de corporis voluptatibus loquar, quarū appetentia quidē plena est anxietatis, &c.

BVt what shal I sain of delyces of body, of whiche delices the desirynges ben ful of anguisches, and the fulfillinges of hem ben ful of penaunce: how great sikenesses and how great sorowes vnsuffrable, right as a maner fruite of wickednes, ben thilke delices wōte to bringen to the bodies of folke that vsen hem? of which delices I not what ioye may ben had of her mouinge. But this wote I wel, that who so euer wol remembrē him of his luxures he shal well vnderstande, that the issues of delices ben sorowful & sory. And yf thilke delices now make folke blisful, than by that same cause moten these beests bē cleped blisful. Of whiche bestes al the entenciō hasteth to fulfil her bodely iolyte. And the gladnesse of wife and children were an honest thynge, but it hath ben said that it is ouer mokel ayenst kinde, that children haue ben founden tourmentours to her fathers, I not howe many. Of which children how biting is euery cōdicion, it nedeth not to tellen it the, that hast er this tyme assayed it, and art yet nowe anguishous. In this tyme aproue I the sentence of my disciple Euripidis, that said, that he that hathe no children is weleful by infortune.

Habet hoc voluptas omnis stimulis agit fruentes: Apiumq; par volautiū vbi gratia mella fuit, Fugit & numis tenaci ferit icta corda morsu. &c.

EVery delyte hathe this, that it anguisheth hem wyth prickes that vsen it. It resembleth to these flieng flies that we clepen bees, that after that he hath shedde his agreable honnyes, he flieth away, and stingeth the hertes of hem that ben smitten with bitinge ouer longe holden.

Nihil igitur dubium est, quin he ad beatitudinem vie deuia quedam sint, nec perducere eo quemquam valeant

NOwe it is no dout than, that these wayes ne ben a maner mistidinges to blisfulnes: ne that they ne mowen not leden folke thider, as they beheten to ledē hem. But with how great harmes these forsaide ways ben enlaced, I shal shew you shortly. For why, if thou enforcest the to assemble money, thou must byreuē him his money ỹ hath it. And if thou wolt shinen with dignities, thou muste beseechen and supplie hem, that yeuen tho dignities. And yf thou coueitest by honour to gone before other folkes, thou shalt defoule thy self thorow humblesse of asking. If ỹ desirest power thou shalt by awaits of thy subiectes anoiousli be cast vnder by many parils. If thou glorie: thou shalt ben so distracte by aspre thīges, that thou shalt forgone sikernesse. And if thou woldest leden thy lyfe in delites, euery wight shal dispisē the and forleten the, as thou that arte thral to thing, that is right foule and britel, that is to saine, seruaunt to thy bodye. Nowe is it wel ysene, howe lytel and how britel possession they coueiten, that putten the goodes of the bodi aboue her own reason. For maist thou surmounten these olifauntes in greatnesse or in weight of body? or mayst thou ben strenger than the bul? mayst thou bee swifter than the Tygre? Beholde the spaces and the stablenesse, and the swyft course of heauē, and stinte somtyme to wondren on foule thinges. The whiche heuen certes nys nat rather for these thinges to be wondred vpon, than for the reason by whiche it is gouerned. But the shininge of thy forme, that is to sayne, the beaute of thy body, how swiftly palling is it, & howe transitorie, certes, it is more fliting than the mutabilite of floures of the sommer season. For so as Aristotell telleth, that yf the men had eyen of a beeste that hight Lynx, so that the lokynge of folke mizt percen thrroughe tho

thinges that withstōde it. Who so loked than in thātrailes of the body of Alcibiades, that was full faire in the superfycie without, it shulde seme right foule. And for thy, yf thou semest faire, thy nature ne maketh nat that, but the deceiuaunce of feblenesse of the eien that lokē. But praise the goodes of the body as moche as euer the lyste, so that ỹ know al gates that what so it be, that is to saine, of the goodes of the body, which that thou wōdrest vpon, maye ben distroyed or els dissolued by the yeest of a feuer of thre daies. Of which forsayd thinges I maie reducen this shortly in a somme, that these worldy goods, which that ne nowen yeuen that they beyyghten, ne ben not parfite by the congregacion of al goodes, that they ne ben not wayes ne pathes, that bringen men to blisfulnesse, ne maken men to be blisful.

Heu heu que miseros tramite deuios abducit ignorantia, Non aurum in viridi queritis arbore. &c.

ALas, whiche folye, and whiche ignorāunce misledethe wandringe wretches, fro the pathe of very good. Certes ye seken no golde in grene trees, ne ye gadren not precious stones in vines: ne ye ne hyden not youre ginnes in hie mountains to catchen fysshe: of the which ye may maken riche feestes.

And if you lyke to hunte to Roes, ye ne gonat to the fords of the water that hight Thyrene. And ouer this men knowe wel the creekes and the cauernes of the see yhyd in the floodes, and knowen eke, whiche water is mooste plenteous of white perles, and knowē whiche water habounded most of reed purpure, that is to saine, of a maner shelfysshe, with whiche men dyen purpure: and knowē whiche stroudes habounden moste of tendre fysshes, or of sharpe fysshes, that hight Echines. But folke suffrē hem self to ben so blind that hem ne retchē not to know wher thilke goodes ben yhidde, which that they coueiten but plungen hem in perthe, and seken there thilke good, that surmounteth the heuē, that beareth the sterres. What prayer may I maken that be digne to the nyce thoughtes of men? But I pray that they coueiten rychesse and honours, so that whan they haue gotten tho falsе goodes with great trauayl, that therby they mowen knowē the very goodes.

Hactenus mendacis formā felicitatis ostēdisse sufficerit, quod si perspicaciter intuearis, ordo cā deinceps. &c.

IT sufficeth that I haue saide hyderto, the forme of false welfulnesse: so that yf thou loke now clerely: the order of mine entencion requireth from hēforthe, to shewen the very welfulnes. B. Forsoth (q I) I se wel now, the sufficiaunce may nat comē by richesse, ne power by realmes, ne reuerence by dignities, ne gētillesse by glory, ne ioye by delices. P. And hast thou wel knowē the causes (q she) why it is? B. Certs me semeth (q I) that I se hem, right as though it were thrugh a litel clyfte: But me were leauer knowen hem more openly of the. Phi. Certes (q she) the reason is al redy. For thilke thinge that simply is one thinge without any deuision, the errour and folye of mankinde, deuideth and departeth it and misledeth it, and transporteth from very and parfit good, to goodes that be falsе and vnparfit. But say me this: weenest ỹ that he that hatye nede of power that him ne lacketh nothinge? Boecious Nay (q I) Philosophie. Certes (q she) thou sayest arighte: for yf so be that there is a thing that in any partie be febler of power, certes as in that it mote nedes be nedy of forain help. Boecius, Right so it is (q I) Philosophie, Sufficiaunce and power ben of one kinde. Boecius, So semeth (q I) Philosophie, And demest thou (q she) that a thinge that is of this maner, that is to saye, sufficiaunt and mighty, oughte ben dispised, or els that it be righte digne of reuerence aboue all thinges? Boecius, Certes (q I) it is no doute that it is rizt worthy to be reuerenced. Philosop. Let vs adden (q she) reuerence to sufficiaunce and to power, so that we demen that these thre thinges be al one thinge Boecius, Certes let (q I) vs adden it if we wil graunt the sothe. P. What demest thou (q she) thā is that a derke thing and not noble, that is sufficiaunt, reuerent, and mighty? or elles that it is right noble and right clere by celebrate of renomme? Cōsider than (q she) as we haue graunted here byforne, that he that ne hath no nede of nothing, and is most mighty and moste digne of honoure, yf hym nedethe any clerenesse of renomme, whiche clerenesse he mighte not graunten of him selfe, so for lacke of thilke clerenesse he might semen the febler on any syde, or the more out cast. Glose That is to say, naye: For who so that is sufficiaunt, mighty, and reuerent, clerenesse of renomme folowethe of the forsaide thinges: he hath it all redy of his sufficiaunce. Boecius.

I maye

I maye not (q̃ I) denye it, but I mote graunten as it is, that this thinge is right celebrable by clerenesse of renomme and noblesse. P. Than folowethe (q̃ she) that we adden clerenesse of renomme to the foresaide thinges, so that there be amonges hem no difference. B. This is a consequence (q̃ I) Philosop. This thinge than (q̃ she) that ne hathe nede of no foraine thynge, and that maye do all thynge by hys strengthes, and that is noble and honourable, is it not a mery thinge and ioyful? Boecius. But whence (q̃ I) that any sorowe might come to this thynge that is soche, certes I maye not thinke. Philosophie. Than mote we graunten (q̃ she) that this thinge be full of gladnesse, yf the foresayde thynges be sothe. And certes, also mote we graunten, that suffisaunce, power, noblesse, reuerence, and gladnesse be onelye diuers by names, but her substaũce hath no diuersite. Boecius. It mote nedelye be so (q̃ I). Philosophie. Thilke thinge than (q̃ she) that is one and simple in his nature, the wickednesse of men departeth and deuydeth it: And whan they enforcen hem to getten partye of a thynge, that ne hath no parte, they ne getten hem neyther thilke partye that nys none, ne the thynge al hole that they desyre. Boecius. In whiche manere (q̃ I). Philosophie. Thilke man (q̃ she) that secheth richesse to flyen pouertye: he ne trauaileth hym not for to get power, for he hathe leauer be derke and vyle, and eke withdraweth from hym selfe many naturell delytes, for he nolde lese the money that he hath assembled. But certes in thys maner he ne gettethe him no suffisaunce, that power forleteth and that molestie priketh, and that fylthe makethe out caste, and that derkenesse hydeth. And certes he that desireth only power, wasteth and scattereth rychesse, and dispiseth delyces & eke houour that is without power, ne he ne prayseth glory nothing. Certes this seest thou well that many thynges faylen to him: For he hath sometyme defaute of many necessitees, and many anguysshes byten hym. And when he maye not don tho defautes away, he forletteth to be myghty, and that is the thynge that he most desyreth. And right thus may I make semblable reasons of honour, of glory, and of delices. For so euery of these forsaid thīges is the same that these other thīges ben, that is to saine, al one thing. Who so euer seketh to getten that one of these and not that other, he ne getteth not that he desyreth. Boecius. What sayest thou than, if that a man coueite to getten al these thinges togider. Philosophie. Certes (q̃ she) I wold say that he woulde get him souerain blissfulnes, but that shall he not finde in tho thynges that I haue shewed, that mowe not yeue that they beheten. Boecius. Certes no (q̃ I). Phi. Than (q̃ she) ne shullen men not by no way seken blissfulnesse in soch thinges, as men wemen that they ne mowe gyuen, but one thyng synglerly of al that men sekē. Boecius. I graunt well (q̃ I) ne non sother thing maye be sayde. Philosophy. Now hast thou than (q̃ she) the forme and the cause of false welefulnesse: Now turne & flytte agayn to thy thought, for there shal thou sene anon thylke very blissfulnesse, that I haue behight the. Boecius. Certs (q̃ I) it is clere and open, though it were to a blynde man: And that shewdest thou me a lytel here beforne, whan thou enforcedeste the to shewe me the causes of the false welfulnesse. For (but if I be begiled) than is that thilke very blifulnesse and parfite, that parfitelye maketh a man suffisaũt, mightye, honourable, noble, and ful of gladnes. And for thou shalte wel knowe, that I haue well vnderstanden these thynges within my herte: I knowe well that thylke blissfulnesse that men verely yeuē one of ẏ forsayd thinges, sens they ben all one: I knowe doutlesse that thilke thynge is ful of blissfulnesse. Philosophy. O my norice (q̃ she) by this opinion I say that thou arte blisful, yf thou put this therto that I shall sayne. Boecius. What is that (q̃ I). Phi. Trowest thou that ther be any thīg in this erthlie mortal tomblinge thinges, that may bringē this estate? Bo. Certes (q̃ I) I trow it not: and thou hast shewed me wel, that ouer thilk good ther nis nothyng more to ben desired. P. These thinges than (q̃ she) that is to saine, erthly suffisaũce & power, and soch thinges erthely, they semen likenesse of very good, or els it semeth that they yeuen to mortall folke a maner of goodnesse, that ne be not parfite, but thilke good that is very and parfite, that may they not yeuen. Boe. I accorde me well (q̃ I). Ph. Than (q̃ she) for as moche as thou haste knowen, which is thilke very blissfulnes, and eke which thilke thinges bē, that liē falsely blissfulnesse, that is to say, ẏ they by disceite semē very goodes: Nowe behoueth thee to knowe whence and wher thou mow seke thilke very blissfulnesse. B. Certes (q̃ I) ẏ desyre I greatly and haue abyden longe time to herken it. P. But for as moch (q̃ she) as it liketh to my disciple

ciple Plato in his boke of Tymeo, that in ryght lytel thynges men shulden beseche the help of god: What iudgest thou that be nowe to done, so that we may deserue to finde that seate of thilke souerain god? B. Certes (q I) I deme that we shullen cleape to the father of all goddes, for withouten him nys there nothing founded a right. P. Thou saiest a right (q he) and began anon to singen right thus.

O qui perpetua mundum ratione gubernas,
Terrarum celiq; sator, qui tempus ab euo, ire
iubes, stabiliscq; manens das cuncta moueri.
Quē non externe pepulerunt fingere cause &c.

O Thou father, soueraine creatour of heuen & of erthes, that gouernest this world by pardurable reason, that commandest the tymes to gone, sythe that age had beginning. Thou that dwellest thy selfe aye stedfaste and stable, and yeuest al other thiges to be meued, ne forieue causes ne cessedē the neuer to compoun werk of flatering mater, but onely the forme of souerain good yset, within the without enuy, that meued the frely. Thou that art alderfarest, bearinge the fayre world in thy thought formedest this wolde to thy likenesse semblable, of that fayre world in thy thought. Thou dawest all thinge on thy soueraine ensampler, and commaundest that this worlde perfetliche ymaked, haue frely and absolute his perfite parties. Thou byndest the elementes by nombres proporcionables, that the colde thynges, mowen accorden with the hotte thinges, and the drie things with the moiste: That the fyre, that is purest, ne flye nat ouer hie, ne that the heuinesse ne draw nat adoun ouerlowe the yerthes, that be plonged in the waters. Thou knyttest togider, the meane soule of treble kinde mouing al thinges, and deuidest it by membres acordyng. And whan it is thus deuided, it hath assēbled amouyng in to roundes, it gothe to turne agayn to him selfe, and enuironneth a full deepe thoughte, and turneth the heuen by a semblable ymage. Thou by euen lyne causes enhancest the soules and the lesse lyues, and abling hem to height by lyght waines or cartes. Thou sowest hem in to heauen and in to yerthe, and whan they be conuerted to thee by thy benigne lawe, thou makest hem retourne ayen to thee by ayen ledyng fire. O father yeue thou to the thoughte to flyen vp in to thy fraite sete, and graunt him to enuironne the well of good. And the light ysounde graunte him to fixen the clere syghtes of his corage in the and scatter thou and to drake that weightes and the cloudes of erthely heuinesse, & shyne thou by thy brightnesse. For thou arte clerenesse, thou arte pesyble reste to debonayre folke, thou thy selfe arte beginninge, bearer, leder, pathe, and terme to loke on the that is our ende.

Quoniam igitur, que sit imperfecti, que etiā perfecti boni forma vidisti, nunc demonstrandum reor. &c.

FOr almoche than, as thou hast sene which is the forme of good that nys not parfite, and the forme of good, whiche that is parfite. Nowe trowe I that it were good to shewe in what this perfection of blisfulnes is set. And in this thing I trow that we shal firste enquire for to weten, if that any soch maner good, as thilke good as thou hast diffynished a litell here beforne, that is to saine, souerain good, maye befound in the nature of thynges. For that vayne imaginacion of thought ne deceue vs not, and put vs out of the sothefastnesse of thylke thynge that is submytted to vs. But it maye not be denied ỹ thylke ne is, and that is right as a wel of al goodes. For al thynge that is cleped imparfite is proued imparfyte, by the amenusyng of perfection of thynge that is parfite. And hereof cometh it that in euery thynge generall, if that men sene any thinge that is imparfyte, certes in thilke thynge generall, there mote be some thyng that is parfyte. For if so be that perfection is don away, men may not thinke ne saye from whence thilke thynge is, that is cleped imperfyte. For the nature ne toke not her beginninge, of thinges amenused and imparfyte, but it procedeth of thynges that ben al hole absolute, and discendeth so down in to the vttrest thynges, and into thynges empty and without frute. But as I haue shewed a litell here beforne, that if that there be a blisfulnesse that be freel and vaine, and imparfayte, there maye no man doubte that ther nys some blisfulnesse, that there is stadde stedfaste and parfyte. Boecious. This is concluded (q I) fermely and sothfastely. P. But consider also (q he) in whome this blisfulnes inhabyteth. The comune accorde and conceyte of the corage of men, proueth and grauteth, that god prince of all thynges is good. For so as nothynge may be thought better thā good, it may not be douted than that he that nothynge

nothyng nis better then he nis good. Certes, reason sheweth that GOD is so good, that it prouveth by very force, that perfite good is in him. For if God nis soche, he ne maie not ben prince of al thing. For certes, some thing possessyng in it self parfite good, should be more worthie then God: and it should semen that thilk thing wer first and older then God. For wee haue shewed appertlie, that all thynges that been parfite, been firste, or thinges that been imperfite. And for thy, for as moche as that my reasō, or my processe, ne go not awaie without an ende, we owen to graunten, that the soueraine good is right full of soueraine parfit good. And we haue established, that the souerain good is very blisfulnesse: then mote it nedes be, that verie blisfulnesse is set in souerain good. Boecius. This take I wel (q I) ne this ne maie not be withsaid in no maner. Philosophie. But I praie thee (q she) se now how thou maiest prouen holily, and withouten corrupcion, this that we haue saied, that the soueraine God, is full of right soueraine good. So. In whiche maner (q I). Phil. Wenest thou aught (q she) that the father of all thinges, hath take thilke souerain good, any where out of hymself? Of whiche soueraine good, menne proueth that he is ful. Right as thou mightest thinken, that God, that hath blisfulnesse in hymself, and thilke blisfulnes that is in him, wer diuers in substaunce. For if thou wene, that God hath receiued thilke good out of hymself, thou maiest wene, that he that yaue thilke good, to god be more worthie then God. But I am beknowe and confesse, & that right dignely, that God is righte worthie aboue all thynges: And if so be that this good be in him by nature, but that is diuerse from hym by wenyng reason, sens wee speaken of God, prince of all thynges. Faine, who so faine maie, who was he that conioyned these thynges togither. And eke at the last se well, that a thyng that is diuers fro any thing, that thilk thing nis not that same thing, for whiche it is vnderstanden to been diuers. Then foloweth it well, that the like thyng that by his nature, is diuerse from souerain good, that thing is not souerain good But certes, it were a felonous curseduelle, to thinken that of hym, that nothyng nis more worthe. For alwaie of all thinges, the name of hem ne maie not been better, then her beginner. For whiche I maie concluden by right verie reason, that thilke that is beginnyng of all thynges, thilke same thyng is soueraine God in his substaince. Boecius. Thou hast saied rightfully (q I). Philosophie. But we haue graunted (q she) that the soueraine good is blisfulnesse. Boecius. That is sothe (q I). Philosophie. Then (q she) wee moten needes graunten and confessen, that the ilke same soueraine good bee God. Boecius. Certes (q I) I ne maie not denie, ne withstande the reasons purposed, and I see well that it foloweth by strength of the premisses. Philosophie. Loke now (q she) if this be proued yet more firmelie thus, that there ne mowen not been to soueraine gooddes that been diuers emong hem self. For certes, the gooddes that been diuers emong hem self, that one is not that the other is. Then ne mowen neither of hem be parfite, so as either of hem lacketh to other, but that that nis not parfite, menne maie seen apertlie, that it nis not soueraine. The thynges then that bee souerainlie good, ne mowen by no waie be diuers. But I haue well concluded, that blisfulnesse and GOD, been the soueraine good, for whiche it mote needes been that soueraine blisfulnesse, is soueraine dignitie. Boecius. Nothyng (q I) is more sothefaste then this, ne more ferme by reason, ne a more worthie thyng then God, maie not be concluded.

Philosophie. Upon these thynges then (q she) right as these Geometriciens, when thei haue shewed their propositions, been wonte to bryngen in thynges, that thei cleapen porismes, or declaracions of foresaied thynges, righte so woll I yeue thee here, as a Corallary or a mede of croune. For why, for almoch as by the gettyng of blisfulnesse, menne been maked blisfull, and blisfulnesse is dignitee. Then it is manifeste and open, that by the gettyng of dignitie, menne been maked blisful, right as by the getting of Justice. And by the gettyng of Sapience, thei be maked wise, right so needes by the semblable reason, whē thei haue gotten diuinitie, thei be made goddes. Then is euery blisfull man a God. But certes, by nature there nis but one God, but by the participacion of the Diuinitie, there ne letteth ne destourbeth nothyng, that there ne bee many Goddes. Boecius. This is (q I) a faire thyng and a precious, clepe it as thou wilte, bee it Corallarie, or Porisme, or mede of Croune, or declaryng. Philosophie. Certes (q she) nothynge nis fairer, then is the thing, that by reason should be added to these foresaied thynges. Boecius. What thyng (q I). Philosophie. So (q she) as it seemeth

that blisfulnesse containeth many thynges, it were for to weten, whether that all these thinges maken or conioynen, as a maner bodie of blisfulnesse, by the diuersitie of parties of members, or els if any of all these thinges, bee soche that it accomplisshe by hymself, the substaunce of blisfulnesse. So all these other things been referred, and brought to blisfulnes, that is to saie, as to the chief of hem. Boecius. I would (q I) that thou madest me clerely to vnderstande what thou saiest, & what thou recordest me the forsaied thinges. Philosophie. Haue I not iudged (q she) that blisfulnesse is good? Boecius. yes forsothe (q I) and that soueraine good. Philosophie. Adde then (q she) thilke good that is made blisfulnesse, to all the forsaied thynges. For thilke same blisfulnesse, that is demed to bee Souerain sufficisaunc, thilk self is souerain power, Soueraine reuerence, soueraine clerenesse or noblesse, and soueraine delite.

What saiest thou then of al these thinges, that is to saie, sufficisaunce, power, and these other thynges? Been thei then as members of blisfulnesse, or been thei referred & brought to soueraine good, right as all thinges that been brought to the chief of hem? Boecius. I vnderstōde well (q I) what thou purposest to seke: But I desire for to herken, that thou shewe it to me. Philosophie. Take now thus the discrecion of this question (q she) If all these thynges (q she) weren members to felicitie, then weren thei diuers that one from that other: and soche is the nature of parties or of members, that diuers members compounen a bodie. Boecius. Certes (q I) it hath well been shewed here before, that all these thinges been al one thing. Philosophie. Thā been thei no members (q she). For els it should seme that blisfulnesse were conioyned all of o member alone, but that is a thyng that maie not be doen. Boecius. This thyng (q I) then, nis not doubtous, but I abide to herken the remnaunt of thy question. Philosophi. This is open and clere (q she) that al other thynges been referred and brought to good. For therfore is sufficisaunce required, for it is demed to be good: and for thy is power required, for mē trowen also that it bee good. And this same thyng mowen wee thinken, and coniecten of reuerence, of noblesse, and of delite. Then is souerain good the somme and the cause, of al that ought to been desired. For why, thilke thyng that with holdeth no good in it self, ne semblaunce of good, it ne maie not well in no maner be desired ne required. And the cōtrary: for though that thynges by her nature, ne been not good, algates if men wenē that thei been good, yet been thei desired, as though thei were verely good. And therefore it is said that men ought to wene by right, that bountie bee the soueraine fine, and the cause of all the things that been to requiren. But certes, thilke that is cause for whiche men requiren any thyng, it semeth that thilke same thynge bee moste desired, as thus: if ỳ a wight would riden for cause of heale, he ne desireth not so moche the mouyng to riden, as the effecte of his heale. Now then sens that al thinges ben required, for the grace of good, thei ne been not desired of all folke, more then thesame good. But we haue graunted that blisfulnes is that same thyng, for whiche that all these other thynges been desired. Then is it thus, that certes onely blisfulnesse, is required and desired. By whiche thing it sheweth clerelie, that of good and blisfulnes, is all one and the same substaunce, Boeci. I se not (q I) wherefore that men might discorden in this. Philosophie. And wee haue shewed, that God and verie blesfulnesse is all one thyng. Boecius. That is sothe (q I). Philosophie. Then mow wee conclude siherly, that the substaunce of God, is set in thilke same good, and in none other place.

Huc omnes pariter venite capti. Quos fallax
ligat improbis catenis. Terrenas habitans libido
mentes. Hic erit vobis requies laborum. &c.

COmeth all together nowe ye ỳ been icaught and bounde with wicked chaines, by the deceiuable delite of yearthly thynges, inhabityng in your thoughte. Here shall bee the reste of your labour: here is the hauen stable, in quiete pesible. This alone is the open refute to wretches, that is to sain, that ye that be combred and deceiued, with worldly affecciōs, cometh now to this souerain good, that is God, that is refute to hem that willen comen to hym. All the thinges that the riuer Tagus yeueth you, with his golden grauels: or els al ỳ thinges that the riuer Hermus, yeueth with his red brinke: or that Indus yeueth, that is next the hote partie of the world, that medleth the greene stones with the white: ne should not cleren the lokyng of your thought, but hiden rather your blind corage within her derknes Al that liketh you here, and exciteth and moueth your thoughtes, ỳ yerth hath nourished it

it within his lowe caues. But the shining, by which the heauen is gouerned, & whence that his strengthe, that eschaweth the darke ouerthrowyng of the soule, and who so euer maie knowen thilke lighte of blisfulnesse, he will saine, that the white beames of the Sonne ne be not cleare.

Assentior [inquam] cuncta enim firmissimis nexa rationibus constant. Tum illa, quanti, inquit, tu estimabis, si bonum ipsum, quid sit, agnoueris, &c.

BOecius. I assent me (q I) for al thynges been stronglie boundē with right ferme reasons. Philosophie. How moch wilt thou praisen it (q she) if that thou knowe what the ilke good is? Boecius. I woll praise it (q I) by price without ende, if it shal betide me to knowe also togither God that is good. Philosophie. Certes (q she) that shall I doe thee by very reason, if that tho thinges, that I haue concluded a little here before, dwellen onely in her graunting. Boecius. Thei dwellen graunted to the (q I) that is to sain, as who saith, I graunte to thy forsaied conclusions. Philosophie. I haue shewed thee (q she) that the things, that been required of many folke, ne been not very goodes ne perfite. For thei been diuers, that one from that other. And so as eche of hem is lackyng to other, thei ne haue no power to bring a good, that is full & absolute. But then at erst been thei very good, whē thei been gathered togider all into one forme, & into one werking: so that thilke thing ꝑ is sufficiaunt, thilke same is power, and reuerence, noblesse, and mirth. And forsothe, but if all these thinges bee all one same thinge, thei ne haue not whereby that thei, mowe be put in the nomber of thynges, that ought to be required and desired. Boecius. It is shewen (q I) ne hereof maie there no manne doubten. Philosophie. The thinges then (q she) that ne been no goodes, when thei been diuers, and when thei beginnen to bee all one thynge, then been thei goodes, ne cometh it not then, by the getting of vnitie, that thei bee maked goodes? Boecius. So semeth it (q I). Philosophie. But all thyng that is good (q she) graūtest thou that it be good, by the participacion of good or no? Boecius. I graunte it (q I). Philosophie. Then must thou graunten (q she) by semblable reason, that one and good bee one same thyng. For of thinges, of whiche the effecte nis not naturelly diuers, nedes her substance must bee one same thyng. Boecius. I ne maie not denie it (q I) Philosophie. Hast thou not knowen well (q she) that all thynge that is, hath so long his dwelling and his substance, as long as it is one, but when it forletteth to been one, it must needes dien, and corrumpen togither. Boecius. In whiche maner (q I). Philosophie. Right as in beastes (q she) whē the soule and the bodie been conioined in one and dwellyng together, it is cleaped a beaste: and when her vnitie is destroyed, by thy discoueraunce of that one from that other, then sheweth it well, that it is a dedde thyng, and it is no lenger no beast.

And the bodie of a wight, while it dwelleth in one forme, by coniunccion of members, it is well seen, that it is a figure of mankinde: And if the parties of the bodie, bee deuided and discouered, that one from that other, that thei distroy the vnitie, the bodie forletteth to bee, that it was before. And who so would renne in the same maner by al thinges, he should seen that without doubte, euery thynge is in his substaunce, as longe as it is one. And when it forleteth to bee one, it dieth and perisheth.

Bo. When I consider (q I) many thinges, I see none other. Philosophie. Is there any thing (q she) that in as moche as it liueth naturellie, that forletteth the talente, or appetite of his beeyng, and desireth to come to death and to corrupcion? Boeci. If I consider (q I) the beastes that haue any maner nature of willyng, and of nillyng, I ne finde no beaste, but if it bee constrained, fro without forthe, that forletteth or dispiseth the intencion to liuen and to duren, or that will his thākes hasten hym to dien.

For euery beaste trauaileth hym to defende and keepe the saluacion of his life, and eschaweth death and destruccion. But certes I doubt me of herbes and trees, that ne haue no feelyng soules, ne no naturell woorkynges, seruynge to appetites, as beastes haue: whether thei haue appetite to dwellen, and to duren.

Philosophie. Certes (q she) thereof dare thee not doubte. Now looke vpon the Herbes and Trees, for thei weren firste in soche places, as been conuenable to hem: in whiche places thei mowe not dien ne dien, as longe as her nature maie defende hem. For some of hem weren in fieldes, and some weren in Mountaignes, and other were in Wareis, & other cleauen on roches, and some weren plē-

teous

teous in sondes. And if any wighte enforce hym to beare hem into other places, thei wexen drie. For nature yeueth to euery thynge, that is conueniente to hym, and trauaileth that thei ne die, as long as thei haue power, to dwellen and to liuen. What wilt thou sain of this, that thei drawen all her nourishynges by her rootes, righte as thei hadden her mouthes iplounged within the yerthes, and sheaden by her mareis, her woode her barke: And what wilte thou saine of this, that the ilke thyng that is right soft, as the Marie is, that is alwaie hidde in the seate all within, and that is defended from without, by the stedfastnesse of woode, and that the vttereste Barkes, is put ayenst the distemperaunce of the heauen, as a defendour, mightie to sustaren harme: And thus certes maiest thou wel seen, howe greate is the diligence of nature: for all thinges renouelen and publishen hem with seede imultiplied.

Ne there nis no manne, that ne wote well, that thei ne been right as a foundement, and edifice, for to duren not onelie for a tyme, but right as for to dure perdurablie by generacion. And the thynges eke, that men wenen ne haue no soules, ne desire thei not by semblable reason, to kepe that is his, that is to saine that is according to her nature, in conseruacion of her beyng and enduryng: For wherefore els beareth lightnes the flambes vp, and the weight presseth the yearth adoun, but for as moche as thilke places, and thilke mouinges, be couenable to eueriche of hem. And for sothe euery thing kepeth thilke, that is accordynge and proper to hym, righte as thynges that been contrarious, and enemies corrumpen hem. And yet the hard thyngs (as stones) cleauen and holdē her parties togither, right fast and hard, and defenden hem in withstanding, that thei ne departen lightly, and yeuen place to hem, that breakē or deuiden hem: but natheless, thei retourne ayen sone into the same thinges, frō whens thei be araced. But fire fleeth and refuseth all deuision. Ne I ne treate not now here, of wilfull mouynges of the soule that is knowing, but of naturel envencion of thinges, as thus: right as we swalowen the meate that wee receiuen, and ne thinke not on it, and as we drawe our breath in slepyng, that we wete not while we slepen For certes in the beastes, the loue of her liuinges, ne of her beynges, ne cometh not of the wilnynges of the soule, but of the beginnynges of nature. For certes, through constraining causes, will desireth and embraceth full oft times the death, that nature dredeth, that is to saine, as thus: That a man maie be constrained, so by some cause, that his wille desireth, & taketh the death, whiche that nature hateth and dreadeth full sore. And sometyme we seen the contrary, as thus: that the wil of a wight disturbeth & constraineth that, that nature alwaie desireth and requireth, that is to saie, the werkes of generacion, by the whiche generacion onely dwelleth, and is sustained the long durabilitie of mortall thynges, as thus. This charitie & this loue, that euery thyng hath to hymselfe, ne commeth not of the mouing of the soule, but of the entencion of nature. For the purueiaunce of God hath yeuē to thinges, that been create of him this, that is a full greate cause to liuen and to duren, for which thei desiren naturelly her life, as long as euer thei mowen: for which thou maiest not dreden by no maner, that all thinges that been any where, that thei ne requiren naturelly, the ferme stableneſſe of perdurable dwellyng, and eke the eschewyng of destruccion.

Boecius. I cōfesse (q I) that I se wel now, and certainly withouten doubt, the thynges that a while ago, semeden vncertaine to me.

Philos. But (q she) thilke thing that desireth to bee & dwell pardurablie, he desireth to been one: For if that one were destroyed, certes, being should there none dwellen to no wight

Boecius. That is sothe (q I).

Philosophie. Then (q she) desiren all thyngs one.

Boecius. I assente (q I)

Philosophie. And I haue shewed (q she) that ilke same one is, thilke that is good.

Boecius. Ye forsothe (q I).

Philosophie. All thynges then (q she) requiren good, and thilke maist thou discriuen thus: good is thilke thyng, that euery wight desireth.

Boecius. There ne maie be thought no more derie thyng (q I) for either all thynges be referred and brought to nought, and flotten without gouernour dispoiled of one, as of her proper hed, or els if there be any thyng, to which that all thinges tenden & hien to, that thyng must be the souerain good of all goodes.

Philosophie. Then saied she thus: O my nourice (q she) I haue great gladnes of thee, for thou hafte fired in thy harte, the middle sothfastenesse, that is to sain the priche, but this thing hath be discouered to thee, in that thou saidest, that thou wistest not a litle here before.

Boec. What is that (q I).

Philosophie. That thou wistest not (q she) whiche was the ende

of

of thynges, and certes, that is the thyng that euery wighte desireth. And for as moche as wee haue gathered and comprehended, that good is thilke thynge, that is desired of all, then mote we nedes confesse, that good is the fine of all thynges.

Quisquis profunda mente vestigat verum.
Cupitq; nullis ille deuijs falli, In se reuoltan intimi lucem visus. &c.

WHO so seketh sothe by a deepe thought, and coueiteth to been disceiueth by no mis waies, let hym rollē and treaten within hymself, the lighte of his inward sight: and let hym gatheren ayen, enclinyng into a compace, the long mouinges of his thoughtes. And let him teachen his courage, that he hath enclosed, and hidde in his treasours, all that he hath compassed or sought fro without: and then thilke thing, that the blacke cloudes of errour, whilome had couered, shall light more clerely thā Phebus hymself ne shineth. Glosa. Who so woll seeke the deepe groundes of sothe in his thought, and woll not bee deceiued, by false propositions, that gone amisse frō the trothy, let hym well examine, and rolle within hymself, the nature and properties of the thyng. And let hym ekte sones examine an rollen his thoughes, by good deliberacion, or that he deme. And let hym treachen his soule, that it hath by naturell principles, kindliche ihidde within it self, all the trouthe, the which he imagineth to been in thynges without: and then all the darkenesse of his misknowyng, shall seme more euidentlie to the sight of his vnderstandyng, then the Sonne ne semeth to the sight without sorthe. For certes, the body bryngyng the weight of sorgetyng, ne hath not chased out of your thought, all the clerenesse of your knowyng, for certainly, the sede of sothe, holdeth and cleaueth within your corage, and it is awaked and excited by the windes, and by the blastes of doctrine.

For wherefore els demen ye of your owne will the rightes, when ye bee asked, but if so were that the nourishyng of reason, ne liued iplunged in the depe of your harte, that is to saine, how should men demen, the sothe of any thyng that were asked, and if there nere a rote of sothfastnesse, that were iplunged & hid in naturell principles, the whiche sothfastnesse liued within the depenesse of ỹ thought, And if so bee, that the muse and the doctrine of Plato singeth sothe, all that euery wighte learneth, he ne dooeth nothyng els then, but recordeth, as menne recorden thynges, that been forgeten.

Tum ego, Platoni (inquam) vehementer assencior. Nam me horum iam secundo commemoras. Primum quod memoriam corporea contegione. &c.

THen saied I thus. I accord me greatlie to Plato, for thou recordest and remēbrest me these thynges, yet the seconde tyme, that is to saie, first when I left my memorie, by the contrarious coniunccion of the bodie with the soule: and eftsones afterward, when I losse it confounded, by thy charge, and by the burden of my sorowe, and then saied she thus. If thou looke (q̄ she) first the thynges that thou hast graunted, it ne shall not been right ferre, that that thou ne shalt remembren the ilke thing, that thou saidest that thou nistest not. Boecius. What thyng (q̄ I). Philosophie. By whiche the gouernement (q̄ she) that this worlde is gouerned. Boecius. I remember it well (q̄ I) & I confesse well, that I ne wist it naught. But all be it so, that I see now from a farre, what thou purposest, algates I desire yet to harken it of the more plainly. Philoso. Thou ne wēdest not (q̄ she) a little here before, that menne should doubte, that this worlde is gouerned by God. Boecius. Certes (q̄ I) ne yet, ne doubte I it not, ne I nill neuer wene that it were to dout, as who saieth, but I wot wel that God gouerneth this worlde. And I shall answerē the by what reasons, I am brought to this. This worlde (q̄ I) of so many diuers & contrarious parties, ne might neuer haue been assembled in o forme; but if there were one, that conioyned so many diuers thinges. And the same diuersitie of her natures, that so discorden, that one fro that other must departen, and vnioynen the thynges, that been conioyned, if there ne were one that conteined, that he hath conioyned and ibound. Ne the certain order of nature, ne shuld not bring forthe so ordeine mouynges, by places, by tymes, by dooynges, by spaces, by qualities, if there ne were one, that wer aie stedfast dwelling, that ordained and disposed, these diuersities of mouynges. And thilke thyng, what so euer it bee, by whiche that all thynges bee imaked and ladde, I clepe hym God, that is a worde that is vsed to al folkes. Philosophie. Then saied she: Sithe thou feelest thus these thynges, I trowe that I haue little more to doen,

doen, that thou mightie of welfulnesse, hole and sounde, ne se eftsones thy countrie. But lette vs looken these thynges, that we haue purposed here beforne. Haue I not nombred and saied (ꝙ she) that sufficiaunce is in blisfulnesse. And we haue accorded, that God is the ilke same blisfulnesse. Boecius. Yes forsothe (ꝙ I). Philosophie. And that to gouern this worlde (ꝙ she) ne shall he neuer haue neede, of no helpe fro without. For els if he had neede of any help, he ne should not haue no full sufficiaunce. Boecius. yes thus it mote nedes be (ꝙ I). Philosophie. Then ordeined he by him self alone all thynges (ꝙ she). Boecius. That maie not be denied (ꝙ I). Philosophie. And I haue shewed that God is the same good. Boecius. It remembreth me well (ꝙ I). Philosophie. Then ordeineth he al thinges by thilke good (ꝙ she) sith he which we han accorded to bee good, gouerneth all thynges by hymself. And he is a key and a steire, by whiche the edifice of this worlde is kept stable, and without corrumpyng. Boeci. I accord me greatly (ꝙ I). And I haue apperceiued alitle here beforne, that thou wouldest saie thus. All were it so, that it wer by a thinne suspeccion. Philosophie. I trowe well (ꝙ she). For as I trow thou leadest now more ententifly thine ye, to loken ỹ very goodes. But natheles, the thing that I shall tell thee, yet ne sheweth not lasse to token. Boecius. what is that (ꝙ I). Philosophie. So as menne trowe (ꝙ she) and that rightfully, that God gouerneth all thynges, by the key of his goodnes. And all these same thyngs that I haue taught thee, hasten hem by naturel contencion, to come to good, there maie no mã douted, that thei ne been gouerned voluntarelie. And that thei ne conuerten of her owne good wille, to her ordeinour. As that thei been accordyng, & enclinyng to her gouernor, and to her kyng. Boecius. It mote nedes be so (ꝙ I) for the realme ne should not seme blisfull, if there were a yoke of misdawynges in diuers partes, ne the sauyng of obedient thynges, ne should not be then. Philosophie. Is there nothing (ꝙ she) that kepeth his nature, that enforceth hym to gon ayenst God? Boecius. No (ꝙ I). Philosophie. And if that any thynge enforced hym to withstande God, might it auailen at last ayen hym, that wee haue graunted to bee almightie, by the right of blisfulnesse? Boecius. Certes (ꝙ I) all vtterlie it ne might not auaile hym. Philosophie. Then is there nothyng (ꝙ she) that either maie, or will withstande to his Soueraine God. Boecius. I trowe not (ꝙ I). Philosophie. Then (ꝙ she) is thilke the soueraine GOD, that all thynges gouerneth strongly, and ordeineth hem softelye. Boecius. Then saied I thus, I delite me (ꝙ I) not onelie in thyndes, or in the somme of the reasons, that thou hasle concluded and proued, but thilke wordes that thou vsest, delitē me moche more so that at lasse fooles, that sometyme renden great thinges, oughten been ashamed of hem self, that is to sain, that we fooles that reprehenden wickedly ỹ thinges, that touchen godes gouernaunce, we oughten been ashamed of our self. As I, that saied that God refuseth onely the werkes of men, and ne entermeteth not of it. Philosophie. Thou hasle well heard (ꝙ she) the fables of the Poetes, how the Gyauntes assaileden heauen, with the Goddes: but forsoth the debonaire force of God, disposed hem as it was worthie, that is to sain, distroied the Gyauntes as it was worthie. But wilte thou that wee reioynen togither thilke same reasons? For perauenture of sothe coniunccions, maie sterten vp some saire sparke of sothe. Boecius. Doe (ꝙ I) as thee list. Philosophie. Wenest thou (ꝙ she) that God ne bee almightie? Boecius. No man is in doubt of it certes (ꝙ I) Philosophie. No wight ne doubteth it, if he bee in his minde (ꝙ she). But he that is almightie, there nis nothyng that he ne maie. Boecius. That is sothe (ꝙ I) Philosophie. Maie God doe euill (ꝙ she)? Boe. Naie forsothe (ꝙ I). Phi. Than is euill nothyng (ꝙ she) sith that he maie dooen none euill, that maie doen al thinges. Bo. Scornest thou me (ꝙ I) or els plaiest thou, or disceiuest thou me that hasle so wonnen with thy reasons, the hous of Dedalus so enterlasing, that it is vnable to bee vnlaced, that thou otherwhile entrest there thou issuest, and otherwhile issuest there thou entrest. Ne foldest thou not togither, by replicacion of wordes, a maner wonderfull circle, or enuironing of the simplicite diuine? For certes, a little here beforn, when thou began at blisfulnesse, thou saidest that it is a souerain good, and that God is the blisfulnesse, for whiche thou yaue me as a couenable yefte, that is to sain, that no wight nis blisfull. but if he be God also therewith. And saidest eke, that the forme of good is, the substaunce of God and of blisfulnesse. And saidest that ỹ ilke one is thilke same good, that is required and desired of al the kinde of thinges. And thou prouedest in disputing, that GOD gouerneth al the thinges of the world, by the gouer-

gouernaunce of bountie, and saidest that all thinges wold obein to hym, and saydest that the nature of yuell is nothinge. And these thinges shewdest thou not with no reasons taken fro without, but by proues in cercles and homlich knowing. The whiche proues drawen to hem selfe her faith and her accorde eueriche of hem of other. Phi. Than said she thus: I ne scorne not, ne plaie, ne disceiue the but I haue shewed the thing that is greatest ouer all thinges, by the yelt of god, that we whilom praiden. For this is the forme of diuine substaunce, that is soothe, that it ne slydeth not in to vtterest forraine thinges, ne receiueth not no straunge thinges, in him. But right as Permenides saied in Greke, of thilke diuine substaunce: He saied thus, that thilke diuine substaunce, tourneth the world and the mouable cercle of thynges, while the ilke diuine substaunce kepeth it self without mowynges, that is to sayne, that he moueth neuer mo, and yet it moueth al other thiges. But natheless, if I haue syzed reason that be not taken fro without the compasse of the thing, of the whiche we treaten, but reasons that been bestowed within cõpasse: there nis not why thou shouldest meruailen, sith thou hast lerned by the sentence of Plato, that nedes the wordes mote been colins to the thinges, of whiche they speken.

Foelix qui potuit boni, Fontem visere lucidum.
Foelix qui potuit grauis, &c.

BLissed is that man that may sene the clere wel of good: Blissfull is he that may vnbinden him from the boundes of heuy yearthe. The Poete of Thrace Orpheus, that whilome had right great sorowe, for the death of his wife. After that he had maked and constrained by his wepely songes, the woodes mouable to renne, and had maked the ryuers to stonden still, and had maked the Hartes and Hyndes to ioynen dredlesse her sydes to cruell Lions, to herken his songe, and had maked that the hare was not agast of the houde, which was pleased by song: So whan the moste ardaund loue of hys wife, brende the entrales of his breaste, ne the songes that hadde ouercomen all thynges, ne myghten not aswagen her lorde Orpheus. He plained him of the heuen goddes, whiche that were cruell to hym, he wente him to the houses of the hell: And he tempered his blandishinge songes, by resounning of strynges, and speakest and songe in wepinge, all that euer he had receiued and laued out the noble welles of his mother Caliope the goddesse. And he sang with as moch as he might of wepinge and with as moche as loue, that doubled his sorow might yeuen him and teache him, and commoued the hell, and required and besoughte by swete prayer the lordes of soules in hell of releasinge, that is to saye, to yelden him his wife: Cerberus the porter of hell, with his thre heedes was caught and al abasshed of the newe songe. And the thre goddesses: Furyes and wengeresses of felonies, that tourmenten and agasten the soules, by anoy woren sorowful and sory and teares wepten for pitee. The was not the heede of Jrion tourmented, by the ouerthrowinge wheele: And Tantalus, that was distroyed by the woodnesse of lõg thirst, dispised the floodes to drinche. The foule that hight Vultour, that eateth the stomake or the giserne of Tytius is so fulfylled of his songe, that it nill eaten ne tyren no more. At the last the lorde and iudge of soules was moued to misericordies, and cried: we been ouercomen (q he) yeue we to Orpheus his wife to beare hym companie, he hath well ybought her by his songes and his ditees: but we will putten a lawe in thys, and couenant in the yelte, that is to saine, that till he bee out of hel if he loke behinde him, that his wife shall come agayne vnto vs. But what is he that maye yeue a lawe to louers? loue is a greater lawe and stronger to him self than any lawe that men maye yeuen. Alas, when Orpheus and his wife were almoste at the termes of the night, that is to saine, at the laste boundes of hel, Orpheus loked backwarde on Euridice his wife, and loste her, and was dedde. This fable apertaineth to you all, who so euer desireth or seketh to lede his thought in to the souerain daie, ỹ is to saye, to clerenesse of souerain good. For who so euer be so ouercomen, that he fixe his eyen in to the pitte of hell, that is to saine: who so euer set his thougtes in yearthlie thynges, all that euer he hath drawen of the noble good celestiall, he leseth it, whẽ he loketh to ỹ helles, this is to saine, in to low thiges of the erthe.

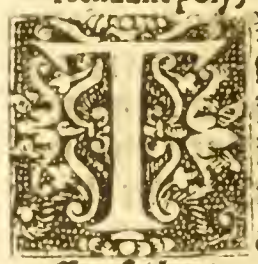
¶ Thus endeth the thirde boke of Boece, and here after followeth the fourthe.

Hec cum Philosophia dignitate vultus,& oris grauitate seruata,leuiter suauiterq; cecinisset, Tum ego non dum penitus insitimeroris oblitus,&c.

Yā Philosophie had songen softly and delectably the forsaid things, keping the dignitye of her chere, & the weight of her wordes. I than that ne had al vtterlye forzieten the wepinge and the mourninge that was sette in min herte, forbrake the entencion of her that entended yet to sain some other thynges.

O (q I) thou that arte gydaresse of very light, the thinges that thou hast saide me hitherto, ben to me so clere and shewing by the deuine lobing of hem, & by thy reasons, that they ne mowen ben ouercomen. And thilke thinges, that thou toldest me, all be it so that I had whilom forzietē hem, for the sorowe of the wronge that hath be done to me: yet neuertheless they ne weren not vtterly vnknowen to me. But this same is namely a right great cause of my sorowe, so that as the gouernour of thinges is good, if that yuels mowen ben by any waies, or elles if that yueles passen without punishinge, the which thing only, how worthye is it to ben wōdred vpon. Thou considrest it wel thy self certainly. But yet to this thing there is yet another thynge ioyned more to be wondred vpon. For felonye is Empresse, and floureth full of richesses, & vertue nis not al onely without meedes, but it is caste downe, and eke forzroden vnder the fete of felonous folke: and it abieth the turmentes in stede of wicked felons. Of al whiche thinges there is no wight may marualen ynough ne complainen, that soch thinges be doone in the reigne of god, that all thynges wote, and all thinges maye, and ne will not only but good thinges. Than saide she thus: Certes (q she) that were a great maruayle, & an abaishinge without ende, and well more horrible than all the monsters, if it were as thou wenest, that is to sain, that in the right ordaine house of so moch a father, and an ordainour of meine, that the vesselles that ben foule and vile, shuld ben honoured and heried and ỳ precious vesseles that shuld ben defouled and vile. But it is not so, for if the thinges that I haue concluded a lytell here before, ben kept hole and vnaraced, thou shalt wel know by the auctorite of god, (of the whose reigne I speake) that certes the good folke be alway mightie, and shrewes ben alway outcaste and feble. Ne the vices be neuermore without pain, ne the vertues ne be not without mede. And that blisfulnes cometh alway to good folk, and infortune cometh alway to wicked folke. And thou shalt well knowen many thinges of this kinde, that shulde ceasen thy playntes, & strengthen the with stedfaste sadnesse. And for thou haste sene the forme of verie blisfulnesse by me, that haue whilom shewed it the, and thou hast knowen in whom blisfulnesse is sette: all thing treated, that I trowe be necessary, to put forthe. I shal shewen the the way, that shall bringen the ayen vnto thin house, and I shall fyre fethers in thy thought, by which it may arisen in height, so that al tribulacion ydone away thou by my giding and by my pathe, and by my stedes, shalte mowen retourne hole and sounde in to thy countrie.

Sunt enim penne volucres michi, Que celsa conscendunt poly, Quas sibi cum velox mens induit.&c.



Han for thy swift fethers that surmounten the height of the heuen, whā the swift thought hath clothed it in tho feathers it dispiseth the hateful erthes. and surmounteth the rounde-nesse of the great ayre, and it seeth the clouds behinde his backe, and passeth the heyght of the region of the fire, that enchaufeth by the swift mouinge of the firmament, tyl that he aryseth in to the houses, that bearen the sterres, and ioyneth the way with the sonne Phebus, and sela whipeth the waye of the olde colde Saturnus, & he ymaked a knight of the clere sterre, that is to saine, whan the thought is made goddes knight, by the seīynge of clere trouthe to comen to the very knowledge of god. And thilke soule renneth by the cercle of sterres, in all the places there as the shinynge nyght is ypainted, that is to saine, the nyght that is cloudlesse. For on nyghtes that bee cloudlesse it semeth that the heuen were paynted wyth dyuers ymages of sterres. And whan he hath done there ynoughe, he shall forleten the laste heuen, and he shal presen an wenden on the backe of the swifte firmamente, and he shall be maked partite of the wurshipful light of god. There holdeth the lorde of thinges the septre of his might, and attempreth the gouernementes of the worlde, & the shining iudge of thinges

stable

stable in hym selfe, gouernethe the swifte carte or waine, that is to saine, the circuler mouinge of the sonne. And if thy way ledeth the ayen, so that thou be brought thider, thā wylt thou saye, that is the countrye that thou requirest, of whiche thou ne haddest no mynde: But nowe it remembereth me well, here was I borne, here woll I fastē my degre, here woll I dwell. But if the lyketh than to loken on the derkenesses of the yearthe, that thou hast forleten, than shalt thou sene, that these felonous tyrauntes, that the wretched people dredeth nowe, shullen be exiled from thilke faire countrie.

Tum ego papè inquam, vt magna promittis.
Nec dubito, quin possis efficere, tu modo quē
exitaueris, ne moreris, &c.

Than saide I thus. O wonder me that thou beheteste me so great thinges. Ne I ne doute not that thou ne mayste well perfourme that thou beheetest: But I pray the this that thou ne tarie not, to tell me thylke thynges, that touh hafte moued. Philoso. First (ꝙ she) thou muste nedes knowe, that good folke been alwaye stronge and myghtye, and the shrewes ben feble and deserte, and naked of all strengthes. And of these thynges certes eueriche of hem is declared and shewed by other. For as good and yuell been two contraries, if so be that good be stedfaste, than sheweth the feblesse al openly. And if thou know clerely the freelnesse of yuell, the stedfastenesse of good is knowen. But for as moche as the faithe of my sentence shall be the more ferme and habundant, I wol gone by that one waye and by that other, and I woll confirme the thynges that ben purposed now on this syde, and nowe on that side. Two thinges ther ben, in whiche the effecte of al the dedes of mankind standeth, that is to sayne, wyll and power: and if that one of these two failleth, there nis nothong that maye bee done. For if that wil lacketh, there nis no wight that vndertaketh to do that he wol not done: And yf power failethe, the wyll nys but ydle, and stante for naught. And therof cometh it, that if thou se a wight that wolde getten that he may not getten, thou mayst not doute that power ne faleth him to hauen that he wolde. B. This is open and clere (ꝙ I) ne it ne may not been deyned in no maner. Philoso. And yf thou se a wight (ꝙ she) that hath done that he would done, thou nylt not dout, that he ne hath had power to done it. Boe. No (ꝙ I) Phi. And in that that euery wight may, in that men holden hem mighty to done a thing. In so moch as a man is myghty to doone a thyng, in so moch men holde him myghty: & in that that he ne may, in that men demē him to be feble. Bo. I confesse it wel (ꝙ I) P. Remembre the (ꝙ she) that I haue gathred and shewed by the forsaid reasons, that all the entencion of the wyl of mankinde, whiche that is ladde by dyuers studies, hasteth to comen to blisfulnesse. Boecius, I remembreth me well (ꝙ I) that it hath bene shewed. Philosophie. And recordeth the naughte than (ꝙ she) that blisfulnesse is thilke same good that men requirē, so that whan blisfulnesse is required of al. Boecius. It recordeth me nat (ꝙ I). For I haue it alwaye in my memorie fyxed. Philosophie. All folke than (ꝙ she) goode and eke badde enforcen hem without difference of entencion to comen to good, Boecius. This is very consequence (ꝙ I) Philosop. And certaine is (ꝙ she) that by getting of good be men maked good. Boe. That is certaine (ꝙ I), Philosop. Than getten good men that they desiren. Boe. So it semet (ꝙ I). Philosophie. But wicked folke (ꝙ she) if they getten the good that they desiren, they ne mowen not be wicked. Boe. So it is (ꝙ I). Philoso. Than so as that one and that other (ꝙ she) desiren the good, & the good folke getten the good, & not the wicked folke: Than it is no doute that the good folke ne be mightye, and wicked folke be feble. Boecius. Who so that euer douteth of this, he ne may not consider the nature of thinges ne the consequence of reasons. Philosop. And over this (ꝙ she) if that there been twoo thynges that haue one same purpose by kynde. And that one of hem pursueth and perfourmeth that same thing by naturel office, and that other ne may not done thilke office naturel, but folweth by other maner, than is couenable to nature, him that accomplisheth his purpose kindely, and yet he ne accomplisheth not hys owne purpose: whether of these two demest thou for more mighty: Boeci. If that I conjecte (ꝙ I) that thou woldest say, algates I desire yet to herken it more plainly of thee. Philosop. Thou nylte not than denye (ꝙ she) that the mouement of goynge nis in men by kynde. Boecius. No forsothe (ꝙ I) Philosophy. Ne thou doutest not (ꝙ she) that thilke naturell office of goynge, ne bee the office of feete. Boecius. I ne doute it no (ꝙ I). Philosophie. Than (ꝙ she) yf that a wyght be mighty to

moue and gothe vpon his fete, and another to whō thilke naturell office of fete lacketh, enforceth hym to go creppynge on his hande, whiche of these two oughte to be holden the more mighty by ryght. Boece. Knytte forthe (q I) the remenaunte. Philosophie. For no wyght ne douteth, that he that maye gon by naturell office of feete, ne be more myghtye thanne he that ne maye not. But the souerayne good (q she) that is euen lyke purposed to the good and to the badde. The good folke seken it by naturel office of vertues, and shrewes enforcen hem to getten it by dyuerse couetises of erthly thinges, whiche that nis no naturel office to gettē thilke souerain good. Trowest thou that it be any other wise? Bo. Nay (q I). For the consequence is open, and the wynge of thinges that I haue graunted, that nedes good folke motē ben mightye, and shrewes moten bene feble and vnmighty. P. Thou rennest a ryght beforne me (q she) and this is the iudgemente, that is to saine, I iudge of right, as these leches ben wont to hopen of sicke folke, whan they apperceyuē, that nature is redressed and withstandeth to the maladye. But for I se the nowe al redy to the withstanding, I shal shew the more thilk and continuel reasons. For loke how greatly sheweth the feblenesse and infirmyte of wicked folke, that ne mowen not comen, to that her naturell entencion leadeth hem: And yet almost thylke naturel entenciō constraineth hem. And what were to demen than of shrewes, yf thilke naturel helpe had forleten hem the whiche naturel helpe of entencion gothe alway beforne hem, and is so great, that vneth it may be ouercomen? Consider than how great defaute of power, and how great febleſſe there is in wicked felonous folke, as who saith, the greater thing that is coueited and the desire not accomplisshed, of the lasse might is he that coueiteth it, and may not accomplisshe. And for thy philosphie saith thus by souerain good. Ne shrewes ne requirē not light medes ne vaine games, whiche they ne maye not folowen ne holdē, but they fallen of thilke somme of the height of things, that is to saine, souerain good. Ne these wretches ne comen not to the effecte of souerayne good, the whiche they enforcen hem onely to getten by nightes and by dayes, in gettynge of which good, the strength of good folke is ful wel ysene. For right as thou mightest demen him mighty of going, that goeth on his fete till he myght comen to thylke place, fro the whiche place there ne lay no way further to be gone: right so must thou nedes demen him forright myghty, whiche that getteth and atteineth to the ende of all thynges, whyche that bene to desiren, beyonde the which ende there nis nothinge to desire. Of the whiche power of good folke, mē maye conclude, that we wicked men semen to be baraine & naked of al strenght. For why forleten they vertues and folowen vices, nis it not for that they ne knowen not the goodes? But what thinge is more feble and more captife, than is the blindesse of ignorauncē or ells they knowen wel, whiche thinges they oughten folowen, but lechery and couetise ouerthroweth hem misturned. And certes so doth dissemperaūce to feble men, that mowe not wrastlen ayen these vices. Ne know they not wel that they forleten the good wilfully, and tournen hem wilfully to vices. And in this wise they ne forleten not only to be myghty, but they forleten all vtterly in any wyse for to been. For they that forleten the comune fine of al thinges that ben, they forleten also therwithall for to bene. And perauenture it shulde semen to some folke, that this were a meruayle to saine, that shrewes, which that conteinen the more partes of men, ne been not, ne haue no being. But natheleſſe it is so, and thus stant this thinge. For they that be shrewes, I deny not, but that thei be shrewes, but I deny simplye and plainly that they ne be not, ne haue no beinge. For right as thou mightest sayne of the caraine of a man, that it were a deed man: so graunt I wel forthe, that vycious folke ben wicked, but I ne may not absolutely & simply graūt that they been. For thilke thing that withholdeth ordre and kepeth nature, thilke thinge is and hath beinge. But what thynge faileth that, that is to saye, he that forleteth naturel ordre, he forleteth thilke beinge that is set in his nature? But thou wolt saine, the shrewes mowen. Certes that ne denie I not: but certes her power ne discēdeth not of strength, but of febleſſe, for they mowen doone wickednesse, the whiche they ne might not, if they mighten dwellen in the forme, and in the doynge of good people. And thilke power sheweth euidently, that they mowen right naught. For so as I haue gadred and proued a litel here beforne, that yuel is not, and so as shrewes may onely but shrewednes. This cōclusion is al clere, that shrewes ne mowen right naught, ne haue no power. And for as moche as thuo vnderstondest

whiche is the strenght of this power, I haue definished a lytel here beforne, that no thing nis so mighty as soueraine good. B. That is sothe (q I). Phil. And thilke same soueraine good maye done none yuel. Boecius. Certes no (q I) Philosop. Is there any wight than (q she) that weneth that men mowen done al thinges. Boecius. No man (q I) but if he be out of his wit. P. But certes shrewes mowen don yuels (q she. Boecius. Ye wolde god (q I) that they ne mighten done none. Phil. Than (q she) so as he that is mightie to done onelye good thinges, he maie done all thynges, and they that ben mighty to done yuell thinges, ne mowen not all thynges. Than is it open thinge and manifeste, that they that mowen don yuel bē of lasse power. And yet the proue this conclusion there helpeth me this, that I haue shewed here beforne, that al power is to be nōbred amonge thinges that men oughtē require. And I haue shewed that all thinges that oughten ben desired be referred to God, right as to a maner height of her nature: but for to mowen done yuell and felonie, ne may not ben referred to god. Than is not yuell of the nombre of thynges, that oughten to ben desired and required. Than is it open and clere that the power ne the mouynge of shrewes nis no power. And of all these thinges it sheweth wel that the good folk ben certainly mighty, and the shrewes doutlesse vnmighty. And it is clere and open that thilke sentence of Plato is very and sothe, that saithe, that onely wisemen may don that they desiren, & shrewes mowen haunten that hem liketh, but that they desirē, that is to saine, to come to soueraine good, they ne haue no power to accomplisshe that. For shrewes done what hem lyst, whan by tho thinges in which they deliten, they wenen to attaine to thilke good that they desyren, but they ne getten ne attaine not therto, for vices ne comen not to blissfulnesse.

Quos vides sedere celsos, Solii culmine reges,
Purpura claros nitente, &c.

Who so that ẏ couerture, of her vaine aparaylles, myzt stripen of these proude kynges that thou seest sitten an high in her chaires, glittering in shininge purpure, enuironned with sorowefull armures, manassynge with cruell mouth, blowinge by woodnesse of herte, he shulde sene that thilke lordes, bearen within her corages full straite chaines: for lechery tourmēteth hem on that one side, with gredy venimes and troublable ire, that araiseth in hem the flode of troublinges, tourmenteth on that other side, her thought or sorow halt hem wery and ycaught, or sliding and disceiuing hope tourmenteth hem. And therefore sithe thou seest one heed, that is to saine, one tirañte bearen so manye tirannyes, than ne doth thilke tyraunt, not that he desyreth syhe he is caste downe wyth so manye wycked lordes, that is to saine, so many vices that haue so wickedly lordships ouer him.

Vides ne igitur quando in cœno probra voluantur, que probitas luce resplendeat: in quo perspicuum est nunquam bonis premia. &c.

Seest thou not than, in howe great filthe these shrewes ben ywrapped, and with whiche clerenesse these good folke shinen. In this sheweth it well that to good folke ne lacketh neuer mo her medes, ne shrewes lacken neuer more tourmentes. For of al thinges that be done, thilke thinge for whiche any thinge is done, it semeth as by right, that thilke thing be the mede of that, as thus: If a mā renneth in the stady or in the forlonge for the crown, than lieth the mede in the crowne for which he renneth. And I haue shewed that blissfulnesse is thilke same good, for whiche that all thynges ben done. Than is thilke same good purposed to the werkes of mankinde, right as a commune mede, whiche mede ne maye not be disceuered from good folke: For no wight as by right, from thensforth that him lacketh goodnesse, ne shall be cleped good for which thing folke of good maners, her medes ne forsaken hem neuer mo. For albeit so that shrewes waxen as wode as hem liste against good folke, yet neuerthelesse the crowne of wise men, ne shall not fallen ne faden fro foraine shewdnesse, ne benimmen not fro the courage of good people her propre honour. But yf anie wight reioysed him of goodnesse, that he had taken fro without, as who saith, if a man had his goodnesse of any other man than of him selfe: certes he that yaue hym thylke goodnesse, or elles some other wyght might bynome it him. But for as moche as to euery wight his propre bounte yeueth him his mede, than at erste shal he failen of mede, whā he forleteth to be good. And at the laste, so as all medes ben required, for men wenen

that they be good, who is he that nold deme, that he that is ryghte mightye of good, were part lesse of mede: And of what mede shall he be reguerdoned. Certes of ryght fayre mede and right great, abouen all medes. Remembre the of thilke noble corallarie that I yaue the a lytel here before, and gather it togither in this maner. So as god him selfe is blisfulnesse, than is it clere and certain, that al good people ben maked blisful, for they bē good and thilke people that ben blisful, it accordeth and is conuenable to be goddes. Thā is the mede of people soch, that no day ne shal empairen it, ne no wickednesse shall dymben it, ne power of no wight ne shal not amenuse it, that is to saine, that ben maked goddes.

And sithe it is thus, that good men ne failen neuer more of her mede, certes no mā ne may doute of the vndepartable paine of shrewes, that is to saine, that the paine of shrewes departeth not from hem selfe neuer mo. For so as good and yuel, and paine and medes be cōtrarie, it mote nedes be, that ryght as wele betiden in guerdone of good, that also mote the paine of the yuel answer by the contrary porthes to shrewes. Nowe than so as bountie and prowesse ben mede to good folke, also is shrewdnesse it selfe tourmente to shrewes. Than who so euer is entetched and defouled with paine, he ne doubteth not, that he is entethed and defouled with yuel. Yf shrewes than wollen praisen hem selfe, may it semen to hem that they ben wyth outen partie of tourment, sithe they ben soch that the vttrest wickednesse, that is to saye, wicked thewes, whiche is the vttrest & worst kinde of shrewdnesse, nede fouleth ne entecheth not hē onely, but enfecteth and enuenimeth greatly. And also loke on shrewes, that ben the contrarie partie of good men, how we great paine felowshipeth and fouleth hem: for thou hast lerned a litel here before, that all thing that is and hath beeinge, is one, and thilke same one is good: than is this the consequence, that it semeth well, that al thing that is and hath beynge, is good, that is to saine, as who saithe that beinge, vnite and goodnesse is al one.

And in this maner it foloweth than, that all thinge that faileth to be good, it stinteth for to be and for to haue any maner being: wherfore it is that shrewes stinten for to be that they weren. But thilke other forme of mankind, that is to saine, the fourme of the bodye without, sheweth ỹ these shrewes weren whilom men, wherfore whan they bene peruerted and tourned in to malice, certes than they haue forlorne the nature of mankinde: But so as onelie bountie and prowesse maye enhaunsen euerie man, ouer men: than mote it nedes be that shrewes which that shrewdnesse hath caste out of the condicion of mankinde, bene put vnder the merite and deserte of men. Than betideth it, that if thou seeste a wight whiche that is transtourmed in to vices, thou maiest not wene that he bee a man For if he be ardaunte in auarice, and that he be a rauenour by violence of forain richesse, thou shalte saine that he is lyke a wolfe. And if he be felonous and withouten reste, and exercice his tonge to chidinges, thou shalte lyken him to the hound. And if he be a priuie awaytour hydde, and reioysseth him to rauishe by wiles, thou shalte saine hym lyke to the fore whelpes. And if he bee distempred & quaked for ire, men shall wenen that he beare the corage of a lion. And if he be dredeful and flienge and dredeth thinges, whiche that ne oughten not to be dredde, men shal holde him lyke to the hart. And if he be slowe and astonyed and lache, men shall holde him lyke to a an asse. And yf he be lyghte and vnstedfaste of corage, and chaungeth aye his studies, men shal holde him like to the birdes. And yf he bee plounged in foule and vnclene luxuries, he is withholden in the foule delyces of the foule sowe, than foloweth it, that he that forlettethe bounte and prowesse, he forletteth to be a man, sithe he ne maye not passen in the condicion of god, he is turned in to a beest.

Vela Naricii ducis, & vagas pelago rates, Eurus appulit insule, pulcra qua residens dea, Solis edita semine, &c.

Eurus the wind, ariued the sailes of Vlixes duke of the countre of Narice, and his wandringe shyppes by the see, in to the yle there as Circes the faire goddesse doughter of the sunne dwelleth, that medleth to her newe gestes, drinkes that been touched and maked with enchauntementes. And after that hir hande mighty ouer the herbes, had chaunged hir gestes in to diuers maners, that one of hem is couered his face with forme of a Boor, that other is chaunged in to a Lion, of the countre of Marmorike, and his nailes and his tethe weren. That other of hem is newlyche chaunged in to a wolfe, and howlyth whan

he

he wolde wepe, that other goth debonairly in the house as a Tygre of Inde. But al be it so that the godheed of Mercury, that is cleped that birde of Archadie, hath had mercy of the duke Vlyxes, byseged wyth dyuerse yuelles, and hath vnbounden hym fro the pestilence of hys hostesse, algathes the rowers and the mariners hadden by this ydrawen in to hyr mouthes, and dronken the wicked drinkes. They that weren worē swine, hadden by this ychaunged hyr meate of bread, for to eaten akorne of Okes. None hir limmes ne dwelleth with hem hoole, but they haue lost the voyce and the body, onely her thought dwellethe with hem stable, that wepeth and bywaileth the monstruous chaunginge that they sufren. O ouer light hande, as who saith, feble and lighth is the hand of Circes the enchaūteresse, that chaungeth the bodies of folke in to beestes, to regarde and to comparyson of mutacion, that is maked by vices, ne the herbes of Circes ne be not myghty, for all be it so that they may not chaungen the limmes of the body, algate yet they may not chaūge the hertes, for wythyn is yhyd the strength and the vigoure of mē in the secretour of hir hertes, that is to saine, the strēgth of reason, but thilke venims of vices, to drawen a man to hem more mightely than the venime of Cyrces, for vices been so cruell that they persen and thorowe passen the courage within, and thoughe they ne anoye not the body, yet vices wooden to destroyen men by wounde of thought.

Tu ego fateor, inquam, nec iniuria dici video
vicioſos, tam & ſi humani corporis ſpeciam
ſeruent. &c.

Than saide I thus: I confesse and am aknowe it (q I) ne I ne se not that men may say, as by right, that shrewes ben chaunged in to beestes, by the qualite of her soules, all be it so that they kepen yet the forme of the bodye of mankynde: but I wolde not of shrewes, of whiche the thought cruel and woode, woodeth alwaye to the distructiō of good men, that it wer lesul to hem to done that.

Certes (q she) ne it is not lefull to hem, as I shall well shewe the incouenable place: but natheless if so were that thilke, that men wene bene lesul to shrewes, were bynommed hem, so that they ne might not anoyen or don harme to good men, certes a great partie of the paine to shrewes shulde bene alleged and releued. For all be it so that it ne seme credible thyng; perauenture to some folke, that it mote nedes be that the shrewes ben more wretches and sely, whā they maye full done and parfourme that they couepten, than yf they might not accompisshe that they couepten. For it so be ẏ it be wretchednesse to wilnen to done yuel, than is it more wretchednehe to mowen done yuell, without whiche mowyng, the wretched wyl shulde languishe without effecte. Than sithe euery of these thinges hath his wretchydnesse, that is to saine, wil to done yuel, and mowinge to done yuel, it mote nedes be that they shrewes be constrayned by her vnselynesses, that wolen and nowen, and parformen felonies & shrewdnesses. Boecius. I accorde me (q I) but I desyre grealy, that shrewes lossen soone thylke vnselyneesse, that is to sayne, that shrewes werendispoiled of mowynge to done yuell.

Philosophi. So shullen they (q she) soner parauenture than thou woldest, or soner thā they hem selfe wene: for there nys nothinge so late in so shorte bondes of this life, that is lōg to abide, namely to a courage immortell. Of whiche shrewes the great, hope & the hye cōpassinges of shrewdnesse, is oft destroied by a sodein ende or they be war. And that thing establisshetȳ to shrewes, ẏ ende of her shrewdnes, for yf that shrewdnes maketh wretches; than must he nedes be most wretch, ẏ longest is a shrewe, the whiche wicked shrewes wold I dēmin aldermoste caitifes and vnsely, yf her shrewdnes ne wer finisshed at leest waye by vttereste death, for yf I haue concluded soth of the vnselinesse of shrewdnes, than sheweth it plaily, that thilke wretchednes, is withouten ende, the whiche is certaine to be pardurble. Bo. Certes (q I) this conclusion is harde and wōderful to graunte. But I knowe well that it accordeth moche to thynges that I haue graunted here beforne. P. Thou hast (q she) right estimacion of this. But who so euer wene that it be a harde thing, to accorde him to a conclusion, it is right that he shewe, that some of the premisses ben false, or els he mote shewe that the collacion of propositions nis not spedeful to a necessary conclusion. And yf it ne be not so, but that the premisses ben igraūted, there nis not why he shulde blame ẏ argumēt. For this thing ẏ I shal tel the now ne shall not seme lasse wonderfull, but of the thinges that bene taken. Also it is necessary.

as who saith, it foloweth of that which that is purposed beforn. Boecius. What is that (ꝙ I) Philosophie. Certes (ꝙ she) that is, that these wicked shrewes bee more blissfull, or els lasse wretches that abien the tourmentes, that they haue deserued, than if no payne of iustice ne chastised hem. Ne this ne say I not nowe, for that any man myght thynke that the maners of shrewes bene coriged and chastised by vengeaunce, & that they be brought to the right way by the drede of tourmente, ne for that they yeuen to other folkes ensample to flyen fro vices.

But I vnderstand yet in another maner, that shrewes ben more vnsely whan they ne be not punished, all be it so that there ne be had no reason or lawe of correccion, ne none ensample of lookynge. Boecius. And what maner shall that ben (ꝙ I) other than hath be tolde here beforne? P. Haue we not graunted than (ꝙ she) that good folke ben blyssfull, and shrewes been wretches? Boeci. Yes (ꝙ I) Philosophie. Than (ꝙ she) If that anye good wer added to the wretchednesse of any wight nys he not more welful, than he that ne hath no medling of good in his solitary wretchednes? Boecius. So semith it (ꝙ I). Philosop. And what sayest thou than (ꝙ she) of thilke wretche that lacketh all goodes, so that no good nis medled in his wretchednesse, and yet ouer all hys wickednesse, for whiche he is a wretche that there be yet another yuell anexed and knit to him, shal not men demen him more vnsely, than thilke wretche, of whiche the vnselines is releued by the participacion of some good? Boecius. Why should he not (ꝙ I) Philosophie. Than certes (ꝙ she) han shrewes whan thei been punisshed somewhat of good annexed to hir shrewdenesse, that is to saine, the same pain that they suffren, which that is good, by the reason of Iustice. And whan thilke same shrewes escapen without tourment, than haue they somwhat more of yuell, yet ouer the wickednesse that they han doen, that is to sain, defaut of paines, which defaute of paine thou haste graunted is yuel, for the deserte of felony. Boecius. I ne may not denie it (ꝙ I). Philosopie. Moche more than (ꝙ she) been shrewes vnsely whan they bene wronfullye deliuered fro paine, than whan they been punished by rightefull vengeaunce. But this is open thynge and clere, that it is right that shrewes ben punyshed, and it is wickednesse, and wronge that they eschapen vmpunished. Boecius. Who might denye it (ꝙ I) Philosophie. But (ꝙ she) may any man deny that all that is right ne is good and also the contrarie, that all that is wrong is wicked. Boeci. Certes (ꝙ I) these thynges ben clere ynoughe, and that we haue concluded a litell here beforne. But I pray the that thou tell me yf thou accordest to letten no tourmente to the soules, after that the body is ended by the death, that is to saine: vnderstandeste thou aught, that soules haue anye tourment after the death of the body. Philosoph. Certes (ꝙ she) yea, and that right great, of whyche soules (ꝙ she) I trowe that some ben tourmented by asprenesse of paine, and some soules I trowe ben exercysed by a purgynge mekenesse, but my counsaile nys nat to determine of this paines. But I haue trauailled and tolde yet hyderto, for thou shuldest know that the mowyng of shrewes, whiche mowing the semeth to be vnworthy, nis no mowynge, and eke of shrewes, of whyche thou playnedest that they ne were not punished, that thou woldest se that they ne weren neuer mo withouten the tourmentes of her wyckednesse. And of the lycence of the mowinge to dooen yuell, that thou praidest that it mighte sone be ended, and that thou wouldest faine lernen that it ne shoulde not longe endure. And that shrewes ben more vnsely yf they were of lenger duringe, and moste vnsely yf they weren perdurable. And after this I haue shewed the that more vnsely ben shrewes, whan they escapen without her ryghtful paine, than whan they ben punished by rightfull vengeaunce. And of this sentence foloweth it, that than ben shrewes constrained at the last with moost greuous tourment whā men wene that they ne be not punished. Boecius. Whan I cōsider thy reasons (ꝙ I) I ne trowe nat that men saine any thyng more verely. And yf I tourne ayen to the studies of men, who his he to whom it shulde seme, that he ne should nat onely leuen these thynges, but eke gladly herken hem. Philosoph. Certes (ꝙ she) so it is, but men maye nat, for they haue their eyen so wont the derkenesse of erthely thynges, that they ne may nat lyfte hem vp to the lyght of cleare sothfastenesse. But they been lyke to birdes, of whiche the night lyghtneth her lokynges, and the daye blindeth hem. For whan men loken not the ordre of thinges, but her lustes and talentes, they wene that either the leue or the mowyng to dooen wickednesse, or els the scapyng without payne be welefull. But cosyder the

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iudgement of the perdurable law, for if thou confirme thy courage to the beste thynges, thou ne hast no nede of no iudge, to yeuen the price or mede, for thou hast ioyned thy self to the moste excellent thinges. And if thou haue enclined thy studies, to the wicked thynges, ne seke no forayne wrekerie out of thy self, for thou thy self, hast thrist thy self into wicked thinges, right as thou mightest looken by diuers tymes, the foule yearth and the heauen; and that all other thynges, stinten fro without, so that thou were in neither, ne see nothynge more. Then should it semen to thee, as by onely reason of lokyng, that thou were now in the Sterres, and now in the yearth, but the people looketh not on these thynges: what then, shall we then approche vs to hem that I haue shewed, that been like to beastes? And what wouldest thou sain of this, if that a manne had all forlorne his sighte, and had foryeten that he euer sawe, and wened that nothynge failed hym, of perfeccion of mankynd? Now we which mighten seen thesame thynges, would wee not saine, that he were blinde, ne also ne accordeth not the people, to that I shall saine, the whiche thyng is sustained, by as stronge foundementes of reason, that is to saine, that more vnselie been thei, that dooen wronges to other folke, then thei that the wronge sustren. Boecius. I would hearen thilke same reasons (q I) Philosophy. Deniest thou (q she) that all shrewes ne been worthie to haue tourment? Boecius. Naie (q I). Philosophie. But (q she) I am certain by many reasons, that shrewes been vnselie.

Boecius. It accordeth (q I). Philoso. Then ne doubtest thou not (q she) that thilke folke, that been worthie of tourmente, that thei ne be wretches. Boecius. It accordeth well (q I) Philosophie. If thou were then set a Judge, or a knower of thinges, whither trowest thou that men should tourmenten hem, that hath dooen wronge, or els hem that suffered the wronge? Boecius. I doubte not (q I) that I nolde doe sufficient satisfaccion, to hem that haue suffred wrōg, by the sorowe of hem that hath doen wrong. Philosophy. Then semeth it (q she) that the dooer of wronge, is more wretch, then he that suffred wrong. Boecius. That soloweth wel (q I). Philosophie. Then (q she) by these causes, and by other causes, that been enforced by ỹ same roote, that filth or synne, by the proper nature of it, maketh men wretches, and it sheweth well, that the wrōges that men doen, nis not the wretchednesse, of him that receiueth the wrōg, but the wretchednesse of him that dooeth the wrong. But certes (q she) these orators or aduocates, doen al the contrary, for thei enforcen hem to commoue the Judges, to haue pitie of hem, that doen the greuaunces and the wronges, the whiche shrewes, it wer a more couenable thyng, that the accusours or aduocates, not wroth, but piteous and debonaire, ledden the shrewes that haue doen wronges, to the iudgement, right as men leden sicke folke to the Leche, for that thei shoulden seehen out, the maladies of synne by tourment. And by this couenaunte, either the entent of aduocates, should cessen in all, or els if thoffice of the aduocates, would better profiten to menne, it should bee tourned into the habite of accusacion, that is to sain, thei shoulden accuse shrewes, and not excusen hem. And eke the shrewes hem self, if it were lefull to hem, to seen at any clifte, the vertue that thei haue forletten, & sawen that thei should putten adoune the filthes of her vices, by the tourmentes of paines, thei ne oughten not, right for that recompensacion, for to getten hem bountie and prowesse, whiche that thei haue loste, demen and hold that the ilke paines weren tourmētes to hem, and eke thei woulden refuse, the attēdaunce of her aduocates, and taken hem self to her Judges, and to her accusours, for the whiche it betideth, that as to the wise folkes, there nis no place ileften to hate, that is to saine, that hate ne hath no place emonge wisemen. For no wight nill haten good men, but if he were ouermoche a foole, and for to haten shrewes, it nis no reason, for right as languishyng is maladie of bodie, right so ben vices and sinne malady of courage. And so as wee ne deme not that thei, whiche that been sicke of her bodie, been worthie to been hated but rather worthie of pitie. Well more worthie not to been hated, but for to been had in pitie been thei, of whiche the thoughtes ben constrained by felonous wickednesse, that is more cruell, then any languishyng of bodie.

Quid tantos iuuat excitare motos. Et propria fatum sollicitate manu? Si mortem petitis propinquat ipsa sponte sua, volucres nec remoratur equos. &c.

What deliteth you to exciten so great mouing of hatredes, and to hasten and busien the fatall dispolicion of your death, with your proper handes, that is to saine, by battailes or contekes?

For if ye alken the deathe, it hasteth hym of his owne wille, ne deathe ne tarieth not his swifte horse. And the menne that the serpentes, and the Lion, and the Tigre, & the Bere, and the Boze, seken to slean with their teeth, yet thilke same menne, seken to slean euerich of hem other with swearde. Loe, for her maners been diuers and discordaunt, thei moue vnrightfull hostes, and cruell battailes, and wilnen to perishe by enterchaungyng of dartes, but the reason of crueltie, nis not inough rightfull. Wilt thou then yelden a conenable guerdon, to the desertes of men? Loue rightfully good folkes, and haue pitie on shrewes.

Hinc ego video inquam, que sit vel felicitas vel miseria in ipsis proborum atq; improborum meritis constituta. Sed in hac ipsa fortuna populari. &c.

THis I see (q I) neither what blisfulnesse, or els what vnselines is established in the desertes of good menne, and of shrewes. But in this ilke fortune of the people, I see somewhat of good, and somwhat of euill. For no wiseman had not leauer bee exiled poore and nedie, and nameless, then for to dwellen in his Citee, and flouren of richesse, and bee redoubtable of honoure, and strong of power. For in this wise more clearly and witnessfully, is the office of wise menne treated, then the blisfulnesse of power, and gouernours, is as it were had emonges the people, that bee neighbors and subiectes, sith that namely prison, lawe, and these other tourmentes of lawfull paines, bee rather owed to felonous Citezeins: for the whiche felonous citezeins, the paines bee established, more then for good people.

Boecius. Then I maruaile greatly (q I) why that the things be so misse enterchaunged, that tourmentes of felonies, pressen and confounden good people, and shrewes rauisshen medes of vertue, and been in honours, and greate estates. And I desire eke for to weten of thee, what semeth thee to be the reason of this so wrongfull a conclusion. For I would wonder wel the lasse, if that I trowed that all thinges wer medled with fortunous hap. But now crepeth and encreaseth myne astonipynges, God gouernour of thyngs, that so as GOD yeueth oft times to good menne, goodes and mirthes, and to shrewes, euil and aspre thynges: And yeueth ayen to good folk hardnesse, and to shrewes he graunteth hem her wille, and that thei desiren. What difference maie there bee, betwene that that God doeth, and happe of fortune, if menne knowe not the cause why it is.

Philosophie. Ne it is no marueile (q she) though that men wenen, that there be somewhat foolishe and confuse, when the reason of the order is vnknowen: but although that thou, ne knowe not the cause, of so greate a disposicion. Natheless, for as moche as God the good gouernour, attempreth and gouerneth the worlde, ne doubte thee not, but all thynges been doen a right.

Si quis Areturi sidera nescit. Mergatq; seras equore flammas. Propinqua summo cardine labi. Cum numis seleris explicet ortus. Cur legat tardus plaustra Bootes. &c.

WHo so that knowe not the sterres Arcture, tourned to the soueraine centure or poinct, that is to saine, tourned nigh to the Soueraine Pole of the firmamente, and wote not why the sterre Bootes passeth, or gathereth his waines, and drecheth his late flambes in the sea, and why that Bootes the Sterre, vnfoldeth his ouerswifte arisynges, then shall he wondren of the Lawe of the high aire. And eke, if that he ne knowe not why, that the hornes of the full Moone waxen pale and infecte, by the boundes of the darke night, and how the Moone darcke and confuse, discouereth the Sterres, that she had couered by her clere visage.

The common errour moueth folkes, and maketh wearie her basins of Brasse by thilke strokes, that is to saie, that there is a maner people, that hight Coribantes, that wenen, that when the Moone is in the Eclipse, that it bee enchaunted, and therefore for to rescue the Moone, thei beaten her basins with the ilke strokes. Ne no man ne wondreth when the blastes of the winde Chorus, beaten the strondes of the Sea, by quakyng floodes. Ne no man ne wondreth, when the weight of the Snowe, harded by the cold, is resolued by the brennyng heate of Phebus the Soonne, for here seen menne readily the causes. But the causes ihidde, that is to sain in heauen, troublen the breastes of men. The mouable people, is astonied of all thynges, that comē selde and sodainlie in our age, but the troublie errour of our ignorance, departeth fro vs, so that if thei wisten the cause, why that soche thynges betiden, certes thei shoulden cease to seme wonders.

Ita est inquam. Sed cum tui muneris sit latentium rerum causas euoluere, velatasq; caligine explicare rationes: queso vti hinc decernas. &c.

THus it is (q I) but so as thou hast yeuen or beheight me, to vnwrappe the hidde causes of thinges, and to discouer me the reasõs, couered with darkneſſe I prate thee, that thou deuise & iudge me of this matter, & that thou do me to vnderstand it, for this miracle of this wõder troubleth me right greatly. And then she a little what smiling said. Thou clepest me (q she) to tell that is greatest of all thinges, ꝧ mowē been asked, & to ꝧ which questiõ, vnneth there aught inough to lauen it, as who saieth, vnneth is there any thyng, to answere perfitlie to thy question, for the matter of it is soche, that when o doubte is determined and cutte awaie. There waren other doubtes without nomber, right as the heddes of Idre the Serpente waren, the whiche Serpente Hercules slough: ne there ne were no manere, ne none ende, but if a wight constrained ꝧ doubtes, by a right liuely & quicke fire of thought, that is to saine, by vigour and strength of witte. For in this matter, men weren wonte to maken questions, of the simplicitie of the purueighaunce of GOD, and of the order of Destinie, and of sodaine happe, and of knowing of predestinacion diuine. And of the libertie of free-will, the whiche thinges, thou thy self apperceiuedest wel, of what weight thei been. But for as moche as the knowynges of these thinges, is a maner porcion or medicine to thee, all bee it so, that I haue little tyme to dooen it, yet neuertheleſſe, I would enforcen me to shewen somewhat of it: But although the nourishinges of ditee of Musike deliteth the, thou muste sufferen and forbearen, a little of the ilke delite, while that I weue to the reasons, knitte by order.

Boecius. As it liketh to thee (q I) so doe.

Philosophie. Tho spake she righte, as by an other beginnyng, and saied right thus. The engenderyng of all thynges (q she) and all the progressions of mouable Nature, and all that mouethe in any maner, taketh his causes, his order, and his formes, of the stablenesse of Diuine thought: And the ilke Diuine thought, that is sette, and putte in the Coure, that is to saine, in the height of the simplicitie of GOD, stablisheth many maner giſes, to the thynges that been to dooen, the whiche maner, when that menne looken it, in the pure cleanesse of the Diuine intelligence, is cleaped purueighaunce.

But when the ilke maner is referred by menne, to thynges that it moueth or disponeth, then of olde menne it was cleaped Destinie, the whiche thynges, if that any wight looketh well in his thought, the strengthe of that one, and of that other, he shall lightlie mowe seen, that these twoo thynges been diuers. For purueighaunce is the ilke Diuine reason, that is established in the Soueraine Prince of thinges, the which purueighaunce disponeth all thynges. But certes, Destinie is the dispolicion and the ordinaunce, cleauyng to mouable thynges, by the whiche dispolicion, the purueighaunce knitteth al thinges in her order: For purueighaunce embraseth all thynges to heape, although thei bee diuers, and although thei be infinite, but destinie certaine, departeth and ordaineth all thinges singulerly, and deuideth in mouing, in places, in formes, and in tymes, as thus: Let the vnfoldyng of tempozell ordinaunce, assembled and oned in the lookyng of the Diuine thoughte, bee cleaped purueighaunce, and thilke same assemblyng and oning, deuided and vnfolden, let that be called Destinie. And all bee it so, that these thynges been diuers, yet neuertheleſſe, hanged that one on that other, for why, the order destinably, procedeth of the simplicitie of purueighaunce.

For right as a werkman, perceiueth in his thoughte, the forme of thynge that he wolle make, and mouethe the effecte of the werke, and leadeth that he had looked before in his thought, simplie and presentlie by corporall ordinaunce: certes, right so GOD in his purueighaunce, disponeth singulerlie and stably the thynges that bee to doen, but he administreth in maners, and in diuers tymes by Destinie, the ilke same thynges that he hath disponed, then whether Destinie bee exercised, either by some diuine spirites, seruauntes to the Diuine purueighaunte, or elles by some soule, or els by all nature seruyng GOD, or els by the celestiall mouynges of Sterres, or els by the vertue of Angelles, or els by diuers subteltie of Diuelles, or els by any of hem, or elles by hem all, the destinable ordinaunce is wouen and accomplished. Certes, it is open thyng, that the purueighaunce, is an vnmouable and simple forme of thynges to dooen, and the mouable bonde, and the tempozalle ordinaunce of thynges, whiche that the Di-

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vine simplicitie of purueiaūce hath ordained to doen, that is destinie. For whiche it is that al thinges that been put vnder destinie, been certes subiectes vnto purueisaunce, to which purueisaunce destinie it self is subiect & vnder but somethiges been put vnder purueiaūce, that surmounten the ordinaunce of destenie: & tho been thilke that stablie been fired nigh to the first godhed, thei surmounten the order of destinable mouabilitie. For right as cercles turnen about a same cētre, or about a poinct, thilke cercle that is innerest or most within, he ioyneth to the simplesse of the middle, and is as it wer a centre or a poinct to that other cercles, that turnen aboute him: & thilke that is vtterest, compassed by larger enuironning, is vnfolde by larger spaces, in so moche as it is fertherest fro the middelest simplititie of the poincte. And if there bee any thyng that knitteth and felowshippeth himself, to thilke middle poincte, it is constrained into simplicitie, that is to saie, into vnmouabilitie, and it ceaseth to been shad, and slit diuersly. Right so by semblable reason, thilke thing that departeth furtherest, fro the firste thought of God, it is vnfolden, & also submitted to greater bondes of destinie, and in so moche is the thing, more free and loce fro dignitie, as it alneth and holdeth nere to thilke centre of things, that is to saine, to God. And if the thyng cleaueth to the stedfastnesse of the thought of God, and bee without mouyng, certes it surmoūteth the necessitie of destinie. Then soche comparison as is skilling to vnderstandyng, and of thinge that was engendred, to thinge that is of time to eternitie, and of the cercle to the centre, right so is the order of mouable destinie, to the stable simplicitie of purueighaunce. Thilke ordinaunce moueth the heauē and the sterres, and attempreth the elemētes togither emong hem self, and transformeth hē by enterchaungeable mutacion. And thilke same order neweth ayen, all things growing and falling adoune, by semblable progressiōs of seedes and of serus, that is to saine, male & female: and this silke order cōstraineth the fortunes, and the dedes of men, by a bōde of causes, not able to be vnbounden: the whiche destinable causes, when thei passen out fro the beginnynges of vnmouable purueisaunce, it mote nedes be that thei ne be not mutable, as thus: be the things well gouerned, if that the simplicitie dwellynge in the diuine thought, sheweth forthe the order of causes, vnable to be bowed. And this order constraineth by the proper stabilitie, the mouable thinges, or els thei shulden flete folilie. For which it is, that thinges semen confuse, & troublie to vs men, for we ne mowen not cōsider thilke ordinaūce. Neuertheless, ỹ proper maner of euery thing dressyng hym to good, disponeth hem all, for there nis nothynge dooen for euill, for thilke thyng that is dooen by wicked folke, nis not doen for euil. The whiche shewes, as I haue shewed full plenteously sehe good, but wicked errour mistourneth hem, ne the order coming fro the poinct of soueraine good, ne enclineth not fro his beginnyng. But thou maiest saie, what vnrest maie been a worse cōfusion, thā that good men haue somtyme aduersitie, and somtyme prosperitie: and shewes haue now also thinges that thei desiren, and now thinges that thei haten. Whether men liue nowe in soche holinesse of thought, as who saith be men now so wise, that soche folke as thei demen to be good folke or shewes, that it mote nedes be, that folk be soche as thei wenē. But in this maner domes of mē discorden, ỹ thilke men that some folke demen worthie of mede, other folke deme hem worthy of turment, but let vs graunt: I suppose that some man maie well deme or knowe the good people, and the bad, maie he then knowe and see thilke innerest attemperaunce of courage, as it hath bee wont to be said of bodies, as who saith: maie a man speaken of complexions, and attemperaunce of bodies, ne it ne is not, as who saith but it is like a meruaile or a miracle, to hem ỹ ne knowe it not, why that swete thinges bee couenable to sum bodies, that been hole, & to sum people bitter things be couenable: & also why sum people ben holpen with light medicines, & some people been holpen with bitter medicines; but natheless tho that knowē the maner, and the temperaunce of heale and of malady, ne marueileth it nothing. But what other thing semeth helth of corages but boūtie, and what other thing semeth maladie of courage but vices: who is els keper of good, & driuer away of euill, but God the gouernor & leader of thoughtes: the whiche God, whē he hath beholden frō the high toure of his purueisaunce, he knoweth what is couenable to any wight, & leaneth hem that he wot well ỹ is couenable to hem. Lo, herof cometh & herof is doen this miracle of thorder destinable, whē God that all knoweth doth soche thing, of whiche thyng, vnknowing folke been astonied, but for to constraine, as who saieth, but for to comprehende and tell a fewe thinges of

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the diuine depeneſſe, the which that mannes reaſon maie vnderſtand. Thilke manne that thou weneſt to been right iuſte, and right kepyng of equitie, the contrarie of that, ſemeth to the Diuine purueighaunce that all wote. And Lucan my familier telleth, that the victorious cauſe liked to the Goddes, & the cauſes ouercome, liketh to Caton. Then what ſo euer thou maieſte ſeen, that is dooen in this worlde vnhoped, or els vnknowen, certes, it is the righte order of thynges, but as to thy wicked opinion, it is a confuſion. But I ſuppoſe that ſome mã be ſo welthewed, that the diuine iudgement, and the iudgement of mãkinde, accorden hem togider of hym: but he is ſo vnſtedfaſt of courage, that if any aduerſitie come to hym, he woll forleten parauẽture to continue innocencie, by the whiche he ne maie not withholden fortune: thã the wiſe diſpenſacion of GOD ſpareth hym, the whiche man aduerſitie, might enpairen, for that god will not hym to trauaile, to whom that trauaile nis not couenable. An other manne is parfite in all vertues, and is an holy manne, and nigh to God, ſo that the purueighunce of God would deme, that it were a felonie, that he wer touched with any aduerſities, ſo that he would not ſuffre, that ſoche a man be with any bodily maladie moued. But ſo (as ſaied ỹ Philoſophier) the more excellẽt is by me ſaid in greate, that vertues haue edified the bodie of the holie manne. And oft tyme it betideth, that the ſomme of thinges, that been to doen is taken to gouerne to good folke, for that the malice habundant of shrewes, ſhould been abated. And God yeueth & departeth to other folke, proſperitees and aduerſities, medled to heape, after the qualitie of her courages, and remordeth ſome folke by aduerſities, for thei ne ſhould not waxen proude, by long welfulneſſe. And other folke he ſuffereth, to bee trauailed with hard thyngs, for that thei ſhould confermen the vertues of courage, by the exercitacion of vſage of pacięce. And other folk dreden more then thei oughten, ỹ whiche thei mighten well bearen, and ſome diſpiſe, that thei mowe not beare, and thilke folke GOD leadeth into experience of hem ſelf, by aſpre and ſorowfull thynges. And many there folk haue boughte, honourable renome of this worlde, by the price of glorious death.

And ſome men that ne mowe not been ouercomen by tourmẽt, haue yeuen enſample to other folke, that vertue maie not been ouercomẽ by aduerſities. And of al theſe thinges there nis no doubt, that thei ne ben doen rightfullie and ordeinly, to the perfit good of hem, to whom we ſeen theſe thinges betiden. For certes, that aduerſities cometh ſometyme to shrewes, and ſomtyme that thei deſiren it cometh of theſe forſaied cauſes. And of ſorowfull thinges that betiden to shrewes, certes, no manne wondreth, for all menne wene that thei haue deſerued it, and that thei been of wicked merite. Of whiche shrewes, the tourmente agaſteth ſometyme other to doen felonies: And ſometyme it amendeth hem, that ſuffereth the tourmentes. And the proſperitie that is yeuen to shrewes, sheweth a greate argument to good people, what thing thei ſhould demen of thilk welefulneſſe, whiche proſperitie menne ſeen ofte, ſerue to shrewes: In whiche thing, I trowe that God diſpenſeth, for parauenture, the nature of ſome man is ſo ouerthrowyng to euell, and ſo vncouenable, that the nedy pouertie of his owne holde, might rather agreue hym to doen felonies, and to the maladie of hym, God putteth remeadie, to yeuen hym richeſſe. And ſome other manne beholdeth his conſcience, defouled with ſynnes, and maketh compariſon of this fortune, and of himſelf: and dredeth parauenture that the bliſſfulneſſe, of whiche the vſage ioyfull to hym, that the leſyng of thilk bliſſfulneſſe, ne bee not ſorowfull to hym, and therefore he would chaunge his maners: and for he dredeth to leſe his fortune, he forleteth his wickednesſe. To other folkes welefulnes is yeuen vnworthilie, the whiche ouerthroweth hem into deſtruccion, that thei han deſerued, & to ſome other folke, is yeuen power to punisshen, for that it ſhall bee cauſe of continuacion, and exerciſyng to good folkes, and cauſe of tourmente to shrewes.

For ſo as there nis none aliaunce betwene good folkes, and shrewes, ne shrewes ne mowen not accorden emong hem ſelf: and why not? For that shrewes diſcorden of hem ſelf, by her vices, the whiche vices, all to renden her conſciences, and dooen oft tyme thynges, the whiche thinges, when thei haue doen hẽ, thei deme that tho things, ne ſhuld not haue be doen, for which thing the ſouerain purueiaunce, hath maked oft time miracle: So that shrewes haue maked shrewes, to been good men. For when that ſome shrewes ſeen, that thei ſuffre wrongfully, felonies of other shrewes, thei waxen eſchaufed into hate of hem, that anoied hem, & retournen to the fruict of vertue. Then thei ſtudien to be vnlike to hem

that thei haue hated. Certes onely is this the diuine might, to the which might iuels been then good, when it vseth the iuelles conenablie, and draweth out the effecte of any good, as who saieth, that iuell is good onely to the might of God, for the might of God ordeineth thilke iuell to good: for one order embraceth all thinges, so that what wight departeth frō the reason of thilke order, that is assigned to him, algates yet he slideth into an other order so that nothing is lefull to folie, in the realm of diuine purueighaunce, as who saieth, nothyng is without ordinaunce, in the realme of diuine purueighaunce, sith that the right strong GOD, gouerneth all thynges in this worlde, for it is not lefull for men comprehēde by wit, ne vnfolden by woorde, all the subtell ordinaunce, and the disposicion of the diuine entēt, for onely it ought to suffice, to haue loked that god himself, maker of al natures, ordaineth al thinges to good, while that he hasteth to with holde the thynges, that he hath maked into his semblaunce, that is to say, for to with holden the thinges into good, for he hymself is good. He chaseth out all iuells fro the bōde of his cominalties, by thorder of the necessitie destinable: for whiche it followeth, that if thou loke the purueiaunce, ordeinyng the thinges, that men wenen be outragious, or haboundāt in yerthes, thou shalt not seen in no place, nothyng of iuell. But I see now that thou art charged, with ỹ weighte of the question, and wearie with lengthe of my reason, and that thou abidest some swetenesse of song, take thā this draught, & when thou art wel refreshed & refect, thou shalt be more stedfaste to stie, into higher questions or thinges.

Si vis celsi iura tonantis. Plura solers cernere
mente, Aspice summi culmina coeli.

If thou wise wolt demē, in thy pure thought, the rightes or ỹ lawes of the hie thonder, that is to sain of God, looke thou & beholde the heightes of the soueraine heauen: There kepen the Sterres, by rightfull aliaunce of thyngs her old peace: The Sonne imoued by his roddie fire, ne dissourbeth not the colde cercle of the Mone, ne the sterre icleped the Bere, that encline th his rauishing courses, abouten the the soueraine height of this worlde. Ne the same sterre Arsa, nis neuer mo washen in the depe westren sea, ne coueteth not to dien his flambes, in the sea of the Occian, although it see other Sterres, iplonged in the sea: And Hesperus the Sterre boodeth, and telleth alwaie the late nightes: And Lucifer the sterre bringeth ayen the cleare daie.

And thus maketh loue enterchaungeable, the perdurable sourses, and thus is discordable battaile, iputte out of the countrey of the Sterres. This accordaunce attempreth by euenlike maners the Elementes, that the moiste thynges, striuyng with the drie thynges, yeuen place by stoundes: And that the colde thynges ioynen hem by faithe, to the hote thynges, and that the light fire, ariseth in to height, and the heauie yearthes, anailen by her weightes: by thesame causes, the flourie yere yeldeth swete smelles, in the first Sommer season warmynge, and the hotte Sommer dreth the Cornes, and Autumpne cometh ayen of heauie Apples, and the fleetyng Raine bedeweth the Winter, this attempraunce nourisheth, and bryngeth for the all thynges, that dureth life in this worlde, and the ilke same attempraunce rauishyng, hideth, benimeth, and drencheth vnder the laste death, all thynges iborne.

Emong these thinges, sitteth the high maker, Kyng and Lorde, weale and beginnyng, Lawe and wise Judge, to dooen equitee, and gouerneth and encline th the bridels of thynges: And tho thinges that he sterreth, to gone by mouynge, he withdraweth and arresteth, and affirmeth the mouable or wanderynge thinges. For if that he ne called not ayen the right goyng of thynges. And if that he ne cōstrained hem not efte sones, into roundenesse enclined, the thynges that been nowe continued by stable ordinaunce, thei should departen from her weale, that is to saine, from her beginnyng and fallen, that is to saine, tournen into nought. This is the common loue to all thynges: and all thynges aske n to been holden by the fine of good, for elles ne mighten thei not fasten, if thei ne come not eftsones ayen by loue, retourned to the cause, that hath yeuen hem beyng, that is to saine God.

Iam ne igitur vides quid hec omnia que di-
ximus consequantur. Quid nam inquit, Om-
nem inquit. &c.

Seest thou not thā, what thyng followeth all the thynges that I haue saied. Boecius. What thyng (ỹ I). Philosophie. Certes (ỹ she) all vtterlie. that all fortune is good. Boecius. And how maie that bee (ỹ I). Philosophie. Now vnderstande

vnderstand(ꝙ she). So as all fortune, whether so it be ioyfull fortune, or aspre fortune, is yeuen either bicause of guerdonyng, or elles of exercising of good folkes, or els bicause to punishen, or els chastisen shrewes: then is al fortune good, the which fortune is certain, that it be either rightfull, or els profitable.

Boecius. Forsothe this is a full verie reason(ꝙ I) and if I consider the purueighaunce and the destinie that thou oughtest me a litle here beforn, this sentence is susteined by stedfaste reasons. But if it like vnto thee, let vs nombren hem emonges the ilke thynges, of whiche thou saidest a little here beforne, that thei ne wer not able to been wened to the people. Philosophi. why so (ꝙ she). Boecius. For that the common word of men(ꝙ I) misuseth this maner speache of fortune, and saine ofte tymes, that the fortune of some wight is wicked. Philosophie. Wilte thou then(ꝙ she) that I approche a little to the wordes of the people so that it seme not to hē, that I be ouermoche departed, as fro the vsage of mankinde. Boecius. As thou wolt(ꝙ I) Philosophie. weenest thou not(ꝙ she) that all thyng that profiteth is good. Boecius. Yes(ꝙ I). Philosop. Certes all thyng that exerceth or corrigeth, it profiteth. Boecius. I confesse well(ꝙ I). Philoso. Then is it good(ꝙ she). Boecius. Why not(ꝙ I). Philosophie. But this is the fortune (ꝙ she) of hem that either be putte in vertue, and battailen againste aspre thynges, or elles of hem that enclinen, and declinen fro vices, and taken the waie of vertue. Boecius. This ne maie I not denie (ꝙ I). Philosophie. But what saiest thou of the merie fortune, that is yeuen to good people in guerdon, demeth ofte the people that it be wicked?

Boecius. Naie for soth(ꝙ I) but thei demen as it is sothe, that it is right good.

Philosophie. What saiest thou of the other fortune(ꝙ she) that although ẏ it bee aspre, & restraineth the shrewes by rightfull turmēt, weneth aught the people that it bee good?

Boecius. Naie(ꝙ I) but the people demeth that it is moste wretched of all thynges, that maie be thought.

Philosophie. ware now, and looke well (ꝙ she) leste wee in followyng the opinion of the people, haue confessed & concluded thing, whiche that is vnable to been wened to the people. Boecius. What is that(ꝙ I)? Phil. Certes (ꝙ she) it followeth or cometh of thynges that been graunted, that all fortune what so euer it bee, of hem that been either in possession of vertue, or in the encrease of vertue, or els in the purchasyng of vertue, that thilke fortune is good, and that all fortune is right wicked, to hem that dwellē in shrewdnesse, as who saith, and thus weneth not the people. Boec. That is sothe (ꝙ I). Albeit so that no man dare confesse it, ne knowe it. Philosop. Why so (ꝙ she). For right as the strong man, ne semeth not to abaschen or disdainen, as oft tyme as he heareth the noise of the battail: ne also it semeth not to the wiseman, to bearen it greuously, as oft as he is ledde into strief of fortune. For bothe to that one man, and eke to that other; the ilke difficultie is the matter, to that one man of encrease of his glorious renoine, and to that other man, to conserue his sapience, that is to saie, to the aspreneſſe of his estate, for therefore is it called vertue, for that it susteineth & enforceth by his strengthes, so that it nis not ouercomen by aduersities. Ne certes, thou that art putte in encreale, or in the height of vertue, ne haste not comen to fleten with delices, and for to walken in bodily lust. Thou sowest or plantest a full eigre battaile in thy courage, ayenst euery fortune: for that the sorowfull fortune confounde thee not, ne that the merie fortune ne corrumpe thee not, occupie the meane by stedfast strengthes. For all that euer is vnder the meane, or all that ouerpasseth the meane, dispiseth welefulnes as who saieth, it is vicious, and ne hath no mede of his trauaile, for it is set in your hād, as who saieth, it lieth in your power, what fortune you is leueſte, that is to saie, good or iuell, for all fortune that semeth sharpe of aspre, if it ne exercise not the good folke, ne chastise the wicked folke, it punisheth.

Bella bis binis operatus annis. Vltor atrides phrigierumis. &c.

THe werker Atrides, that is to saie Agamemnon, that wrought and continued the battailes by. x. yere recouered and purged in wreking by the distruccion of Troie, the soste chambers of Mariage in his brother, that is to saie, that Agamemnon wan ayen Heleine, that was Menelaus wife, his brother. In the meane while that thilke Agamēnon, desired to yeuen sailes to the Grekes nauie, and brought ayen the windes by bloode: He vnclothed hym of pitee of Father, and the sorie priest yeueth in sacrifiyng, the wretched cuttyng of the throte of the doughter, that is to saie, that Agamemnon let cut the throte of his doughter by the priest, to maken aliaunce

with

with his Goddes, and for to haue wind, with whiche he might wenden to Troie. Itacus, that is to saie Ulixes, bewept his fellowes ylorne, the whiche felowes, the feirs Poliphemus, liggyng in his great caue, had fretten & dreinte in his emptie wombe: But nathelesse Poliphemus woode for his blind visage yeld to Ulixes ioy, by his sorowfull teares, that is to saie, that Ulixes smote out the iye of Poliphemus, that stode in the forehed, for whiche Ulixes had ioye, when he sawe Poliphemus weping and blind. Hercules is celebrable for his hard trauaile, he daunted the proude Cētaurus, halfe horse, halfe man, and biraft the dispoiling fro the cruell Lion, that is to saie, he slough the Lion, and birafte him his skin. He smote the birdes that hight Arpies, with certaine arowes. He rauished Apples, fro the waking dragon: and his hande was the more heauie, for the golden metall. He drough Cerberus the hound of hel, by the triple chaines. He ouercomer, as it is saied, hath put an vnmeke lord, fodder to his cruell horse, that is to saie, Hercules slough Diomedes, & made his horse to fretten him: and he Hercules slough Idra the serpente, and brente the venim. And Achileus the flood defouled in his forehedde, dreint his shamefast visage in his stroundes, that is to saie, that Achileus could trāsfigure himself, into diuers likenes, and as he faught with Hercules, at last he tourned hym into a Bull, and Hercules brake one of his hornes: & he for shame hid hym in his Riuer. And ouer that, he Hercules caste adoune Antheus the Giaunt, in the strondes of Libie. And Cacus appeised the wrathes of Euander, that is to saie, that Hercules slough the monster Cacus and apeised with that death, the wrath of Euander. And the bristled Bore, marked with vomes, the shoulder of Hercules, the whiche shulders, the hie cercle of heauen should thirst And the last of his labors was, that he susteined the heauen, vpon his neck vnbowed, and he deserued eftsones, the heauen to be the last ende of trauaile. Goeth nowe then ye strong men, there as the greate ensāple leadeth you. O nice menne, why make ye your backes, as who saieth: o ye slowe and delicate men, why se ye aduersities, and ne fight not ayenst hem by vertue, to winnen the mede of heauen: for the mede ouercomen, yeueth the sterres, that is to sain, that whē that yearthly lust is ouercomen, a man is maked worthy to the heauē.

¶ Here endeth the fowerth booke of Beoce.

¶ Here foloweth the fiueth booke of Boecius.

Dixerat, orationisq́. cursum ad alia quedam tractanda atq́. expedienda vertebat. B. Tū ego, recta quidē inquā. &c.

SHE had saied, and turned the course of her reason, to some other thynges, to be treated and to be sped. Boecius. Then saied I, certes rightful is thine amonesting, and full digne by aucthoritee. But that thou saidest whilom, that the question of the Diuine purueighaunce, is enlaced with many other questions, I vnderstande well and proue it, by ẏ same thing. But I aske, if that thou wenest, that hap bee any thyng, in any waies, and if thou wenest, that happe be any thyng, what is it? Philosophie. Then (q̄ she) I haste me to yelden and assoilen, to the debte of my behest, and to shewen & open the waie, by which waie, thou maiest come ayen to thy countree: but albeit so that the thinges, whiche that thou askest, been right profitable to knowe, yet been thei diuers, som what fro the pathe of my purpose, and it is to doubte, that thou ne bee maked wearie by misse waies, so that thou ne maieste not suffice, to measure the right waie.

Boecius. Ne doubt thee thereof nothyng (q̄ I). For to knowen thilke thinges togider, in the whiche thynges I delite me greatlie, that shall been to me in stede of rest, sith it nis not to doubten of the thynges folowing, whē euery thynge of thy disputacion, shall hauen been stedfast to me, by vndoubtous faithe.

Philosophie. Then (saied she) that maner woll I dooen to thee, and beganne to speaken right thus. Certes (q̄ she) if any wight definishe hap in this maner, that is to saine, that hap is betidyng ibrought foorthe, by foolishe mouing, and by no knitting of causes, I confirme that hap nis right naught in no wise, and I deme all vtterlie, that happe nis, ne dwelleth but a voyce, as who saieth, but an idell woorde, without any significacion of thynge, committed to that voyce. For what place might been lefte, or dwellynge in folie, and to disordenaunce, sithe that GOD leadeth and constraineth all thynges by order. for this sentence is verie sothe, that nothyng hath his beeyng of naughte, to the whiche

sentence.

sentence, none of these old folke ne withstaied neuer, al be it so, that thei ne vnderstanden it not, by GOD, Prince and beginner of wooryng, but thei casten, as a maner foundemēt of subiecte materiall, that is to saine, of the nature of al reason. And if that any thyng is waxen or comen of no causes, then shall it seme, that thilke thyng is comen or woxen of naught. But if this ne maie not bee dooen, then is it not possible that hap bee any sothe thynge, as I haue definished a little here beforne. Boecius. Howe shall it then bee (q I) nis there then nothyng, that by right maie been cleaped, either hap, or els aduenture, or fortune? Or is there ought, all bee it so, that it is hid fro the people, to whiche thyng these woordes been couenable.

Philosophie. Wyne Aristotle (q she) in the booke of his Philike, diffinisheth this thynge by short reason, and nigh to the sothe.

Boecius. In whiche maner (q I).

Philosophie. As ofte (q she) as men dooen any thyng, for grace of any other thyng, and an other thyng then thilke thyng, that men entenden to doen, betideth by some causes, it is icleaped happe, right as a manne dalfe the yearth, bicause of tillyng of the field, & found there a gobet of golde bedoluen, then wenen folke, that it is befall by fortunous betidyng. But forsothe it nis not of naught, for it hath his proper causes, of which causes, the cours vnforeseen and vnware, semeth to haue maked hap. For if the tiller of the fielde, ne dolue not in the yearth, and if the hider of the gold, ne had hid the gold in that place, the golde ne had not been found. These been then the causes, of the abredgyng of fortuit hap, the whiche abredgyng of fortuit hap cometh, of causes of encountryng, and flowyng togither to hem self, and not by thentencion of the doer. For neither the hider of the golde, ne the delver of the field, ne vnderstanden not, that the gold should haue been founde. But as I saied, it betid a ran togither, that he dalfe there as the other had hid the gold. Now maie I thus definishe hap. Happe is an vnware betiding of causes, assēbled in thynges, that been doen for some other thyng. But thilke order procedyng, by an vnescheuable betidyng togither, whiche that discendeth from the well of purueighaunce, that ordeineth al thynges in her places, and in her times maketh, that the causes rennen and assemblen togither.

Rupis Achemenee scopulis vbi versa sequentum,
Pectoribus fugit spicula. &c.

TIgris and Eufrates, resoluen and springen of o welle, in the cragges of the roche of the countrey of Achemenee, ther as the fliyng battailes firen her dartes, retournyng in the breastes of hem that folowen hem. And sone after the same riuers, Tigris and Eufrates, vnioynen and departen her waters, and if thei comen together, and been assembled, and cleaped together into o course, then moten thilke thynges fleten togider, whiche that the water of thenterchaunging flood bringeth. The shippes and the stockes araced with the flood moten assemblen, and the waters imedled, wrappeth or emplieth many fortunell happes or maners, the whiche wandryng happes natheless, thilke declining lowneſſe of the yerth and the flowyng order of the slidyng water gouerneth. Right so fortune that semeth, as it suffreth with slaked or vngouerned bridles it suffreth bridles, that is to saine, to been gouerned, and passeth by thilke lawe, that is to saine, by the deuine ordenaunce.

Animaduerto inquam, idq; vti tu dicis ita esse, consencio. Sed in hac herentium. &c.

THis vnderstande I wel (q I) and I accorde me that is is right as thou saiest. But I aske if there be any libertie of free wil, in this order of causes, that cleaueu thus togither in hem self, or els I would weten if that the destinall cheine, constraineth the mouyng of the courages of men.

Philosophie. Yes (q she) there is libertie of free will, ne there ne was neuer no nature of reason, that it ne had libertie or free will. For euery thing that maie naturally vsen reason it hath dome, by whiche it deerneth and demeth euery thing. Then knoweth it by it self thynges that been to flien, and thynges that been to desiren, and the ilke thyng that any wight demeth to been desired, that asketh or desireth he, and flieth thilke thynge, that he troweth be to flien. Wherefore in all thynges that reason is, in hym also is libertie of willyng and of nilyng, but I ne ordaine not, as who saieth, I ne graunt not, that this libertie, be euen like in al thinges. For why in the Soueraines deuines substaunces, that is to sain, in spirites, iudgement is more clere and will not corrumpe, and mightie redy to spedē thynges that been desired. But the soules of

men moten needes been more free, when thei looken hem in the speculacion, or lookyng of the deuine thought, and lasse free when thei liden into the bodies, and yet lasse free when thei been gathered togither, and comprehended in yearthly membres, but the last seruage is, when that thei been yeuen to vices, and haue ifall from the possession of her proper reason. For after that thei haue caste awaie her yen, fro the light of the soueraine sothefastnesse, to lowe thynges and darcke, anone thei darcken by the cloude of ignorance, and be troubled by felonous talentes, to the whiche talentes, when thei approchen and assenten, thei heapen and encreasen the seruage, whiche thei haue ioyned to hem self. And in this maner thei been caitiues, fro her proper libertie, the whiche thyng natheless, the lookyng of the deuine purueiaunce seeth, that al thynges beholdeth and seeth fro eterne, & ordeineth hem euerichе in her merites, as thei been predestinate, and it is said in Greke, that all thinges he seeth, & al thinges he heareth.

Puro clarum lumine phebum. Melliflui canit oris Homerus. &c.

HOmer with the honie mouth, that is to saine, Homer with the sweete ditees singeth, that the Sonne is cleare by pure light. Natheless, yet ne maie it not by the infirme light of his beames, breaken or percen the inwarde entrailes of the yearth, or els of the Sea. So ne seeth not God, maker of the greate worlde, to hym that looketh all thynges from an high, ne vnderstandeth nothynges by heauinesse of the yearth, ne the night ne withstandeth not to hym by the blacke cloudes, thilke God seeth in o stroke of thought, all thynges that been, weren, or shull come: and thilke GOD, for he looketh & seeth all thynges alone, thou maist saine that he is the verie soonne.

Tum ego: en inquam difficiliore rursus ambiguitate confundor. &c.

THen said I thus, now am I cōfounded, by a more hard doubt then I was. Philosoph. what doubte is that (q he) for certes, I conjecte now by soch thinges, thou art troubled. Boecius. It seemeth (q I) to repugnen and to contrarie greatlie, that God knoweth before all thinges, and that there is any fredome or libertie, for if so bee that God looketh all thynges before, ne God ne maie not been deceiued in no maner. Then mote it needes bee, that all thynges the whiche that the purueighaunce of God, hath seen before to come, for which if that GOD knoweth tofore, not onely the werkes of men, but also her counsailes and her willes, then ne shall there bee no libertie of arbitree, ne certes, there ne maie bee none other deede, ne no wille, but the ilke whiche that the deuine purueighaunce (that ne may not been deceiued) hath feeled before, for if that thei mighten withen awaie, in other maner, then thei been purueighed, then ne should there be no stedfast prescience of thyng to comen, but rather an vncertaine opinion. the whiche thyng to trowen of God, I deme it felonie and vnlefull. Ne I ne proue not the ilke same reason, as who saieth, I ne alowe not, or I ne praise not thilke same reason, by whiche that some men wenen, that thei mowen assoilen, and vnknitten the knot of this question. For certes thei saine, that thyng nis not to comen, for that the purueighaunce of GOD, hath seen before that it is to comen, but rather the cōtrarie, and that is this, that for that the thynges is to comen, that therefore ne maie it not been hid fro the purueighaunce of God. And in this maner, this necessitie slideth ayen into the contrarie partie, ne it ne behoueth not needes, that thynges betiden that been ipurueighed, but it behoueth nedes, that thynges that been to comen been ipurueighed, but as it wer itrauailed, as who saith, that thilke answere procedeth right as though menne trauaileden or weren busie to enquiren, the whiche thynge is cause of the which thynges. As whether the prescience is cause, of the necessitie of thynges to comen, or els that the necessitie of thinges to comen, is cause of the purueighaunce. But I ne enforce me not now to shewen it, that the betidyng of thynges iwiste before is necessarie, how so or in what maner, that the order of causes hath it self, although that it ne seme not, that the prescience bring in necessitie of betidyng, to thynges to comen. For certes, if that any wighte sitteth, it behoueth by necessitie, that the opinion be soth, of hym that conceiueth that he sitteth, and ayenwarde also is it of the contrarie, for if the opinion bee sothe of any wight, for that he sitteth, it behoueth by necessitie that he sitte. Then is here necessitie in that one, and in that other: for in that one is necessitie of sittyng, and certes in that other is necessitie of soth. But therfore ne sitteth not a wighte, for that the opinion of the

sittyng

sittyng his sothe, but the opinion is rather sothe, for that a wight sitteth before. And thus although that the cause of the sothe, cometh of that other side, as who saieth, that although the cause of sothe cometh of the sitting, and not of the true opinion, algates yet is there a common necessitie, in that one, and in that other. Thus seweth it, that I maie make semblable thilles, of the purueighance of God, and of thynges to comē. For although that for that thynges been to comen, therefore been thei purueighed, and not certes, for thei been purueighed, therfore ne betide thei not, natheless it behoueth by necessitie, that either the thynges it to comen, been ipurueyed of God, or els that the thynges, that been purueighed of God betiden. And this thyngs onelie sufficeth inough, to destroien the freedom of our arbittre, that is to sain, of our fre will. But certes, nowe sheweth it well how farre fro the sothe. & how by so doune is this thing, that we seen that the betidyng of tempozall thynges, is cause of the eterne prescience. But for to wenen that God purueyeth the thynges to comen, for thei ben to comen. What other thynge is it but for to wene, that thilke thinges that betide whilom, been causes of thilke souerain purueighaunce, that is in God. And hereto adde I this thinges, that right as when that I, wote that a thyng is, it behoueth by necessitie, that thilk self thing bee, and eke when I haue knowen that any thyng shall betiden, so behoueth it by necessitie, that thilke same thynges betide. So followeth it then, that the betidyng of the thinges iwist before, ne maie not bee eschewed, and at the laste, if that any wighte wene a thyng, to been otherwise then it is, it nis not onely vnscience, but it is deceiuable opinion, full diuers and farre fro the sothe of science. Wherefore, if any thyng bee so to comen, that the betidyng of it, ne bee not certaine, ne necessarie, who maie weten before, that thilke thing is to comen. For right as sciēce, ne maie not be medled with falseneſſe, as who saieth, that if I wote a thing, it ne maie not be false that I ne wote it, right of thilke thyng, that is conceiued by science, ne maie not be none, otherwise then as it is conceiued, for that is the cause why, that sciēce wanteth lesing, as who saith, why that weting ne receiueth not lesyng of that it wote, for it behoueth by necessitie, that euery thyng bee right, as science cōprehendeth it to be. What shal I then sain, in whiche maner knoweth God, before all the thynges to comē, if thei ne be not certain. for if that he deme, that thei been to comen vneschuably, and so maie bee that it is possible, that thei ne shullen not comen, God is deceiued, but not onely to trowen, that God is deceiued, but for to speake it with mouthe, it is a felonous synne. But if that God wote, that righte so as thynges been to comen, so shoullen thei comen, so that he wote egally, as who saith indifferently, that thyngs maie bee doen, or els not idoen. What is thilke prescience, that ne comprehendeth no certaine thyng ne stable, or els what differēce is there bitwene the prescience of thilke saye, worthy Deuinyng of Tirelie Deuinour, that saied. All that I saie (q he) either it shall be, or els it shall not bee, or els how moche is worthe the Deuine prescience, more then the opinion of mankinde, if so bee that it demeth the thynges vncertaine, as men doen. Of the whiche domes of men, the betidyng nis not certaine. But if so be, that none vncertain thynges, ne maie been in him, that is right certaine well of all thynges, then is the betidyng certaine of thilke thynges, whiche that he hath wisse before, fermely to comen, for whiche it followeth, that the fredome of the counsailes, and of the werkes of mankind nis none, sith that the thought of God, that seeth all thynges, without errour of falsnesse, bindeth and constraineth hem to a betidyng by necessitie. And if this thyng bee ones igraunted and receiued, this is to saine, that there nis no free will, then sheweth it well, how great destruccion, and how greate domages there folowen of thinges of mankind, for in idell been there then purposed, and behighte medes to good folke, and paines to badde folke, sith that no mouyng of free courage voluntarie, ne hath not deserued hem, that is to saine, neither mede ne paine. And it should seme then, that thilke thing is alderworst, which that is now demed for aldermoste iust, and moste rightful. That is to sain, that shrewes been punished, or elles that good folke bee iguerdoned, the whiche folkes sene that her proper wille ne sente hem to that one, ne to that other. That is to sain, neither to good ne harme, but constraineth hem certain necessitie of thynges to comen, then ne shullen there neuer been, ne neuer weren vice ne vertue, but it shullen rather be confusiō of all desertes, medled without discreciō. And yet ther followeth an other inconueniēce, of the whiche there ne maie be thought no more felonous, ne more wicked,

and that is thus, that so as the order of thynges is idel, and cometh of the purueiaunce of God, ne that nothyng nis lefull, to the counsailes of manhinde, as who saieth, that men haue no power to doen nothyng, ne will nothyng, then followeth it that our vices been referred to the maker of al good, as who saith then foloweth it, that God ought to haue the blame of our vices, sith he constraineth vs by necessitie to doen vices, then nis there no reason to hopen in God, ne to praien to God, for what should any wight hopen to God, or why should he praien to GOD, sith that the ordenaunce of destinie, whiche that ne maie not been enclined, knitteth and streineth al thinges, that men maie desiren. Then should ther be doen awaie thilke onely aliaunce, betwen God and man, that is to sain, to hopen and to praien. But by the price of right wisnesse, and of very mekenesse, wee deseruen the guerdon of Diuine grace, whiche that is inestimable, that is to say, that is so great, that it ne maie not been full praised, and this is onely ỹ maner, that is to saie, hope and praiers. For whiche it semeth that men woll speak with God, and by reason of supplicacion, ben conioined to thilke clerenes, that nis not approched no rather, or that men seken it and impetren it. And if men ne wene not the hope ne praiers, ne haue no strēgthes, by ỹ necessitie of things to comen receiued, what thing is there then, by whiche we mowen been cōioyned, and cleuen to thilke souerain prince of thynges. For whiche it behoueth by necessitie, that the linage of mankinde, as thou song a little here before, bee departed and vnioined from his wele, and failen of his beginnyng, that is to saine God.

Que nam discors federa rerum, Causa resoluit: Quis tanta deus. &c.

What discordable cause hath to rēt, and vnioyned the bindyng or the aliance of thynges, that is to sain, the coniunccions of God, and of man: Whiche God hath established so greate battaile, betwene these twoo sothfaste, or verie thynges. that is to sain, betwene the purueiaunce of God, and free will, that been singuler, & deuided, ne that thei ne wollen not been medled, ne coupled togeder: But there nis no discorde to the very thinges, but thei cleauen alwaie certain to hem self. But the thought of man confounded and ouerthrowen, by the darke mēbers of the body, ne maie not by fire of his darked lookyng, that is to saine, by the vigour of his insight, while the soul is in the bodie, knowen the thyn subtell knittynges of thynges. But wherefore eschaufeth it so by so great loue, to finden thilke notes of soth icouered, that is to saine, wherefore eschaufeth the thought of man, by so greate desire, to knowe thilke notificacions, that been hid vnder the couertures of sothe? Wote it ought thilke thynges, that it anguishous desireth to knowe? As who saieth naie. For no manne trauaileth, for to weten thynges that he wote. And therefore the texte saieth thus.

But who trauaileth to weten thynges yknowe? And if that he ne knoweth hem not, what seketh thilke blinde thought? What is he that desireth any thynges, of whiche he wote right naught? As who saith, who so desireth any thynges, needes somwhat he knoweth of it, or els he ne coud not desiren it. Or who maie followe thynges, that ne been not iwiste, and though that he sehe the thynges, where shall he finde hem? What wight that is all vnconnyng and ignoraunt, maie know that for me, that is ifounde.

But when the soule beholdeth, and seeth the higy thought, that is to saine God, then knoweth it togither the somme and singularities, that is to sain, the principles, and eueriche of hem by hymself. But now while the soule is hid in the cloude, and in the darknesse of the membres of the bodie, it ne hath not al foryeten it self, but it witholdeth the somme of thynges, and leseth the singularities. Thā who so that seeketh sothenesse, he nis in neither nother habite, for he wote not all, ne he ne hath not all foryetten, but yet hym remēbreth the somme of thinges, that he withholdeth, and asketh counsaile, and retreateth deplyche thinges iseen before, that is to saine, the great somme in his mind, so that he mow adden the partes, that he hath foryeten to thilke parties, that he hath witholden.

Tum illa. Vetus inquit, hec est de prouidencia querela: Marquoq; Tullio. &c.

Then saied she, this is (q she) the olde question of the purueighaunce of GOD. And Marcus Tullius, when he deuided the Deuinacions, that is to saine, in his bookes that he wrote of deuinacions, he moued greatlie this questiō, and thou thy self hast isought it moche, and vtterlie and long, but yet ne hath it not been determined

determined, ne isped fermelie and diligentlie of any of you, and the cause of this darkneſſe, and of this difficultie is, for that the mouing of the reaſō of mankinde, ne maie not mouen to, that is to ſaine, applien or ioynen to the ſimplicitie of the diuine preſcience, the which ſimplicite of the diuine preſcience, if that mē mighten thinken it in any maner. That is to ſaine, that if men mighten thinke, and comprehēden the thinges, that God ſeeth himſelf then there dwelled vtterly no doubt, the whiche reaſon and cauſe of difficulties, I ſhall aſſaie at laſt to ſhewe & to ſpeden, when I haue firſte iſpended, & anſwered to thy reaſons, by whiche thou art moued, for I aſke why thou weneſt, that thilke reaſons of hem that aſſoilen this queſtion, ne bee not ſpedfull inough ne ſufficient, the whiche ſoluciō or the which reaſon, for that it demeth, that the preſcience is not of neceſſitie of thinges to come, as who ſaith, any other waie then thus, but that the ilke thinges, that the preſcience wote beforn ne maie not vnbetiden, that is to ſaine, that thei moten betide. But then, if that preſciēce ne putteth none neceſſitie to thynges to comen, as thou thy ſelf haſt confeſſed it, and beknowe a little here beforne, what cauſe, or what is it, as who ſaith, there maie no cauſe bee, by whiche that the endes voluntarie of thynges, mighten be conſtrained to certaine betidynge. For by grace of policion, ſo that thou maie the better vnderſtand this that foloweth, I ſuppoſe that there ne bee no preſcience: then ſaide I (q ſhe) in as moche as apertaineth to that, ſhoulden then thynges that comen of free will, be conſtrained to betiding by neceſſitie? Boecius. Naie (q I). Philoſop. Then ayenwarde (q ſhe) I ſuppoſe that there be preſcience, but that it ne putteth no neceſſitie to thinges, that trowe I that thilk ſame fredome of will, ſhall dwellen al hole and abſolute, and vnbounden. But thou wilt ſaine, that albeit ſo that preſcience, nis not cauſe of the neceſſitie of betiding to thinges to comen algates yet it is a ſigne, that the thinges ben to betiden by neceſſitie. By this maner then, although that preſcience had neuer be, yet algates or at leſt waie, it is certain thyng, that endes of betidinges of thinges, to comē ſhoulden bee neceſſarie. For euery thing ſheweth & ſignifieth onely, what the thing is, but it ne maketh not the thing that it ſignifieth. For which it behoueth, firſt to ſhewe that nothing ne betideth, that it ne betideth by neceſſitie: ſo that it maie appeare, that the preſcience is ſigne of neceſſitie: or els if there were no neceſſitie, certes thilke preſcience ne might not be ſigne of thyng that nis not. But certes, it is now certain, that the proue of this ſuſteined by ſtedfaſt reaſon, ne ſhall not been ladde, ne proued by ſignes ne by argumētes, taken fro without, but by cauſes couenable and neceſſarie. But thou maieſt ſaine, how maie it bee that the things ne betiden not, that ben purueied to comen? But certes, right as we trowen that the thynges, whiche that the purueiaunce wote beforne, to comen ne be not to betiden. But that ne ſhold we not demen, but rather although thei ſhall betidē, yet ne haue thei no neceſſitie of her kinde to betiden: and this maieſt thou lightly apperceiuen, by this that I ſhall ſain. For we ſeen many thinges, when thei been beforne our iyne, right as mē ſeen the Carter woorchyng in the tournyng, and in the attempring or a dreſſing of his cartes or chariottes, and by this maner, as who ſaieth, maieſte thou vnderſtande of all other werkemenne. Is there then any neceſſitie, as who ſaieth, in our lokyng, that conſtraineth or compelleth, any of thilke thinges to been doen ſo? Boecius. Naie (q I) for in idle and in baine were all the effecte of crafte, if that all thynges weren moued, by cōſtrainyng of our iyen, or of our ſight. Philoſophie. The thynges then (q ſhe) that when that men doen hē, ne haue no neceſſitie that men doen hem, eke tho ſame thynges firſt or thei bee doen, thei been to comē without neceſſitie: for why ther been ſome thynges to betiden, of whiche the endes and the betidynges of hem, been abſolute and quite of all neceſſitie. For certes, I ne trowe not that any manne would ſaine this, that the thynges that men ne doen now, that thei ne were to betiden firſt, er thei wer doen. And thilke ſame thynges, although men hadden wiſte hem beforne, yet thei haue free betidynges. For right as ſcience of thynges preſent, ne bryngeth in no neceſſitie, to thynges that men ne doen, right ſo to the preſcience of thynges to comen, ne bringeth in none neceſſitie, to thinges to betiden. But thou maieſte ſain, that of thilk ſame it is doubted, as whether that of thilke thynges, that ne haue non iſſues and betidynges neceſſaries, if thereof maie been any preſcience. For certes, thei ſemen to diſcorden, for thou weneſt, that if that thynges deen ſeen beforе, that neceſſitie foloweth hem, and if neceſſitie faileth hem, thei ne might not been wiſte beforе, and that nothyng maie be comprehended by ſcience, but

certaine. And if tho thynges ne haue no certain betidynges, be purueighed as certain, it should be darkenesse of opinion, not sothfastnesse of science. And thou wenest that it be diuers, fro the holinesse of science, that any mā should deme a thyng, to bee otherwise then it is it self, and the cause of this errour is, that of al the thinges, ỳ euery wight hath knowe thei wene that tho thinges been knowe, onely by the strengthe, and by the nature of the thynges, that been wiste or knowe, and it is all the contrarie: for all that euer is knowe, it is rather comprehended and knowe, not after his strength and his nature, but after the facultie, that is to saine, the power and the nature of hem that knowē. And for that this thyng, should now shewe by a short ensample the roundnesse of a bodie, otherwise then the sight of the ye knoweth it, & otherwise then the touchyng. The lookyng, by castyng of his beames, waiteth and seeth from a farre, all the bodie togither, without mouyng of it self but the touchyng cleaueth to the rounde bodie, and moueth about the enuironnyng, and comprehendeth the parties by roundenesse, and the man hymself, otherwise beholdeth hym, and otherwaies imaginaciō, and otherwise reason, and otherwise intelligence: For the witte comprehendeth without forth, the figure of the bodie of man, that is vnstablished in the matter subiect. But the imagination comprehendeth onelie, the figure without the matter. Reason surmounteth imagination, and comprehendeth by vniuersall lokyng, the common speache, but the ye of intelligence is higher, for it surmounteth the enuironnyng of the vniuersitie, and looketh ouer that, by pure subtilitie of thought. The ilke same simple forme of man. that is perdurable, in the diuine thought, in whiche this ought greatlie to be considered, that the hiest strengthe for to comprehenden thynges, embraseth and containeth the lower strengthe, but ỳ lower strēgth, neariseth not in no maner to the higher strength. For witte ne maie comprehende nothyng out of matter, ne the imagination, ne looketh not the vniuersalle speces, ne reason ne taketh not the simple forme, so as intelligence taketh it. But intelligence that looketh al abouen, when it hath comprehended the forme, it knoweth and demeth all the thynges, that been vnder the forme, but she knoweth hem in thilke maner in whiche it comprehendeth thilke same simple forme, that nemaie neuer bee knowen of none of that other, that is to saie, to none of tho three forsaied strengthes of the soule, for it knoweth the vniuersitie of reason, and the figure of imagination, and the sensible material conceiued by wit, ne it ne bleth not ne of reason, ne of imagination, ne of witte without forthe, but it beholdeth all thynges, so as I shall saie, by a stroke of thought fermely, without discours of collacion. Certes, reason when it looketh any thyng vniuersall, it ne bleth not of imagination ne witte, and algates yet it comprehendeth the thynges imaginable, and sensible, for reason is she that definisheth, the vniuersalle of her conceipte, right thus. Man is a reasonable two footed beast, and how so that this knowyng is vniuersall, yet nis there no wight, that ne wote well, that a man is a thynge imaginable and sensible, and this same considereth well reason, but that nis not by imagination, nor by witte, but it loketh it by reasonable conceipcion. Also imagination, albeit so, that it taketh of witte the beginnyng, to seen and formen the figures, algates although that witt ne were not presente, yet it enuironneth and comprehendeth all thynges sensible, not by reason sensible of demyng, but by reasō imaginatife. Seest thou not then, that all ỳ thinges in knowyng, bien more of her facultie, or of her power, then thei dooen of the facultie, or of power of thynges that been to knowen, ne that is no wronge, for so as euery iudgemente is: that deede or doyng of hym, that demeth, it behoueth that euery wight performe his werke, and his entencion, not of forsaine power, but of his proper power.

Quondam porticus attulit. Obscuros nimium sensus. &c.

When the porche, that is to saie, a gate of the toune of Athenes there as Philosophers hadden congregacion to dispute, thilke porche brought sometyme olde men, full darke in her sentences, that is saie Philosophers, that highten Stoiciens, that wende that Images and sensibilities, that is to saie, sensible imaginacions, or els imaginacions of sensible thinges, were empринted into soules, fro bodies without forthe, as who saieth, thilke Stoiciens wenden that the soule had bee naked of hymself, as a mirrour, or a cleane perchemine, so that all figures mussen first comen fro thynges, fro without in to soules, & been empринted into soules, right as we been wonte, sometyme

tyme by a swifte pointen, to fixen letters empynted in the smothnesse, or in the plainesse of the table of waxe, or in ỹ parchemine, that hath no figure ne note in it. Glose. But now argueth Boece against that opiniõ, and saith thus. But if the thinyng soule ne vnpliteth nothyng, that is to saine, ne dooeth thyng by his proper mouing, but suffreth and lieth subiect to the figures, and to the notes of bodies withoutforthe, and yeldeth Images idell, yeuell and vaine, in the maner of a mirroure. whence thriueth then, or whence cometh the ilke knowyng in our soulle, that discerneth and beholdeth all thynges, and whence is the ilke strengthe, that beholdeth the singuler thynges, or els whence is the strengthe, that deuideth thynges iknowe, and thilke strẽgth that gathered togither thynges deuided. and strength that choseth ỹ enterchaunged waie: for somtyme it heaueth the hedde, that is to saie, that it heaueth vp the entenciõ, to right high thynges, and somtyme it discendeth in to right lowe thynges, and when it retourneth into hym selfe, it reproueth and destroyeth the false thynges, by the true thynges.

Certes, this strength is cause more efficiẽt, and moche more mightie, to seen and to knowen thynges, then thilke cause that suffreth and receiueth the notes and figures, impressed in maner of matter. Algates the passion, that is to saie, the sufferaunce or the witte in the quicke bodie, goeth before erityngе, and mouyng the strengthes of the thought, right so as when that clearenesse smiteth the yen, and moueth hem to seen, or right so as voyce or soun hurleth to the eares, and commoueth hem to hearken, then is the strengthe of the thought moued and excited, cleapeth forth to semblable mouynges, the speces that it halte within it selfe, and addeth the speces of the notes, and to thynges withoutforthe, and medleth the Images of thynges withoutforthe, to thynges hid within hymselfe.

Quod si in corporibus sentiendis quamuis efficiant instrumenta sensuum. &c.

BVT what is that in bodies to bee feled, that is to saie, in the taking: and in the knowyng of bodily thynges. And albeeit so that ỹ qualities of bodies, that be obiecte fro withoutforthe, mouen and entalenten the instrumentes of the wittes, and all bee it so, that the passion of the bodie, that is to saine, the witte, or the suffraunce, goeth before the strength, or the wooschyng courage, the whiche passion or sufferaunce, cleapeth forthe the deede of the thought in it self, and moueth and exciteth in this meane while, the formes that restẽ withinforthe, and insensible bodies, as I haue said, our courages nis not taught or empynted, by passion to knowe these thinges, but demeth and knoweth of his owne strength. the passion or sufferaunce, subiecte to the bodie: moche more then tho thynges been absolute, and quicke fro all talentes, or affecciõs of bodies, as God or his Angels, ne folowen not in discernyng thynges obiect fro withoutforth, but thei accomplishen and speden, the deedes of her thought. By this reason then, there comen many maner of knowynges, to diuerse and to diffryng substaunces.

For the witte of the bodie, the whiche wit is naked, and dispoiled of all other knowing, thilke witte cometh to beastes, the whiche ne mowen not mouen hem self here and there, as Oysters and Muskelles, and other soche Shelfishe of the Sea, that cleauen and been nourished to rockes, but the imagination cometh of remuable beastes, that semen to haue talente to flien, or to desiren any thyng: But reason is alonelie the linage of mankinde, right as intelligence is alonelie the Diuine nature, of whiche it followeth, that the ilke knowyng is more worthe then is either, sens it knoweth by his proper nature, not onelie his subiecte, as who saieth, it ne knoweth not alonelie, that appertaineth properlie to his knowyng, but it knoweth the subiectes of all other knowynges. But how shall it thã bee, if that witte and imagination, striuen ayen reasonyng, and saine that of the ilke vniuersall thynge, that reason weneth to seen, that it nis right naught, for witte and imaginacion saine, that that is sensible or imaginable, it ne maie not been vniuersall.

Then is there either the iudgement of reason sothe, ne that there nis nothyng sensible, or els for that reason wote well, that many thinges been subiect to wit, and to imaginacion: then is the conceptiõ of reason vain and false, whiche that loketh and comprehendeth that that is sensible and singuler, as vniuersall. And if that the reason would answere ayenste these twoo, that is to saie, to witte and imaginacion, and saie that sothly she her self that is to sain reason, loketh and comprehendeth by reasõ of vniuersalitie, both that that is sensible, and that that is imaginable, and thilke twoo, that is to sain, witte and imagi-

nacion, ne mowen not stretchen hem self, to the knowynge of vniuersalitee, for that the knowing of hem ne maie not exceden, ne surmounten the bodily figures. Certes, of the knowyng of thynges, mē ought en rather yeuen more credence, to the more stedfast, and to the more perfite iudgemente, in this maner striuyng, then we that haue strengthe of reasonyng, and of imaginaciō, and of witte, that is to saie, by reason and by imaginacion, wee would rather praise the cause of reason, as who saieth, then the cause of witte, and of ymaginacion. Semblable thing is it, that the reason of mankinde ne weneth not, that the Diuine intelligence, beholdeth or knoweth thynges to come, but right as the reason of mankinde knoweth hem: For thou arguiste thus, that if that it ne seme not to men, that some thynges haue certaine betidynges, thei ne maie not be wiste, before certainlie to betiden, and then is there no prescience of thilke thynges, and if we trowe, that prescience bee in these thynges, then is there nothyng, that betideth by necessitie. But if we might haue the iudgemente, of the diuine thought, as we been parteners of reason, right so as we haue demed, that it behoueth by imaginacion and witte, and beneth reason, right so would we demen, that it were rightfull thyng, that mannes reason ought to submitte it self, to be beneath the diuine thought, for whiche if wee maie, as who saieth, that if wee maie, I counsaile, that we enhaunce vs in the height of thilke souerain intelligence, for there shall reason well seen that, that it ne maie not beholde in it self, & certes, that is thus, in what maner the prescience of God, seeth all thyngs and diffinischeth, all though thei haue no certain betidynges: ne this is none opinion, but rather the simplicitie of the souerain science that is not shet, within no maner of boundes with her goyng, or with her feete, and to gon either by the greene fieldes, or els to walken vnder the woodes. And all it be so that thou seest, that thei discorden by diuers formes, algates her faces enclined, heauieth her dulle wittes, onely the linage of manne heaueth highest his hie hedde, and standeth light with his vpright body, and beholdeth the yearthes vnder hym. And but if thou yearthlie manne waresse euill out of thy wit, this figure amonesteth, thee that alkest the heauen, with thy right visage, and hast areised thy forehedde, to bearen vp on high thy courage, so that thy thought ne bee not heauied, ne put lowe vnder foote, sith that thy body is so high areised.

Quam varijs terras animalia permeant figuris.
Namq; alia extento sunt corpore. &c.

THE beastes passen by the yearthes, by full diuers figures, for some of hem haue her bodies straught, and crepē in the dust, and drawen after hem a trace, or a forough continued, that is to saie, as Neders and Snailes, and other bestes, by the wanderyng lightnesse of her winges, beaten the windes, and ouer swimmen the spaces of the long aire, by mosse fliyng.

And other beastes gladden hem self, to diggen her traces, or her steppes in the yearthe,

Quoniam igitur vti paulo ante monstratum est, omne quod scitur. &c.

Therefore then, as I haue shewed a little here before that all thing that it wist, nis not knowē by his nature proper, but by the nature of hem that cōprehenden it. Let vs lokē now, in as moche as it is lefull to vs, as who saieth, let vs looken now as wee maie, whiche that is the estate of the Diuine substaunce, so that wee maie well knowe, ehe what his science is. To common iudgement of al creatures reasonables, then is, that god is eterne. Let vs consider then, what is eternitee, for certes, that shall shewen vs togider, the diuine nature, and the diuine science. Eternitee then is perfite possession, and all together of life interminable, and that sheweth the more clerelie, by the comparison or collacion of temporall thynges.

For all thyng that liueth in tyme, it is present, and procedeth fro preteritees, into futures, that is to saine, frō time passed, into time comming: ne there nis nothing established in tyme, that maie enbracen togither, all the space of this life, for certes, yet ne hath it not taken, the tyme of to morowe, and it hath lost that of yester daie. And certes, in ỹ life of this daie, ye ne liuen no more, but right as in this mouable, & transitorie moment. Then thilke thyng that suffereth temporall condicion, all though that it neuer began to be, ne thought it neuer cease to be (as Aristoteles demed of ỹ world) and although the life of it be stretched with infinite of tyme, yet algates nis it no sothe thynge, as men might trowen by right that it is eterne. For all though that it compreheude, and embrace the space of the life infinite

finite, yet algates ne embraſethe it not the ſpace of the life all togither, for it ne hathe not the futures that be not yet: Ne it ne hath no lenger the preterities that ben done or paſſed. But thilke thing than, that hath and comprehendeth togider all the plente of the life interminable, to whom there ne faileth nought of the future, and to whom ther nis nought of ỹ preterite eſcaped or paſſed, thilke ſame is ywitneſſed and proued by right to ben eterne. And it behouethe by neceſſite that thilke thing be alway preſente to him ſelfe, and competent, as who ſaith, alway preſent to him ſelfe, and ſo mighty, that all be right at his pleſaunce, and that he haue al preſent the infinite of the mouable tyme. Wherfore ſome men trowen wrongfullye, that whan they heren that it ſemed to Plato, that this world had neuer beginninge of time, that it neuer ſhall haue faylynge: they wene in thilke maner, that this worlde be maked eterne, wyth his maker, as who ſaythe, they wene that this worlde and god be maked togither eterne. And that is a wrõgful wening for other thing it is to be ladde by the life interminable, as Plato graũted to the worlde, and other thinge it is to enbrace togither, al the preſence of the life that is interminable, which thinge is clere and manifeſt to the dyuine thought. Ne it ne ſhulde not ſeme to vs that god is elder than thinges that bẽ maked by quantite of time, but rather by the proſperite of his ſimple nature. For this ylke infynyte mouynges of temperal thynges, foloweth thys preſentary eſtate of thys lyke immouable, and ſo as it ne maie not countreſeten ne faine it, ne be euẽlike to it for the immobilite, that is to ſay, that is in the eternite of god, it faileth & faileth in to mowing fro the ſimplicite of the preſence of god, and diſcreaſeth in the infinite quantite of future and preterite. And ſoas it may not haue togyder all the plentie of the lyfe, algates yet for as moch as it ceaſeth neuer, for to bẽ in ſome maner, yet it ſemeth ſomdele to vs, that it followeth and reſſembleth thilke thinge, that it ne may not attaine to ne fulfillẽ, and bindeth it ſelfe to ſome maner preſence of thys lytel moment: the whiche preſence of this lytel & ſwifte momẽt for that it beareth a maner ymage of lykeneſſe of the aye dwelling of god: it graunteth to ſoche maner thinges, as it betideth to, ỹ it ſemeth hem as theſe thynges haue ben, and ben. And for that the preſence of ſoche lytel momẽt ne may not dwell, therfore it rauiſhed and toke thinfinite waie of time, that is to ſaye, by ſucceſſion, and by this manere it is done, for that it ſhulde continue the life in goyng, of the whiche lyfe it ne might not enbrace the plẽtie of dwelling. And for thy, if we wollen put worthy names to thinges that folowen Plato, let vs ſaye than ſothelye, that God is eterne, and that the worlde is perpetuell. Than ſithe euery iudgement knoweth & comprehendeth by his owne nature, thinges that ben ſubiect vnto hym, there is to god alwayes an eterne and a preſentarie eſtate. And the ſcyence of hym that ouerpaſſeth al tempoꝛal moment, dwelleth in ſimplicite of his preſence, and enbraſeth and conſydereth all the infynite ſpaces of tymes preteritees, and of tymes futures. And loketh in his ſimple knowing, al thynges of preterite, right as they werẽ ydon preſently right nowe. If thou wolte than thynken & aduiſe the preſcience, by whiche it knoweth al thinges, thou ne ſhalt not demẽ it as preſcience of thinges to comẽ, but thou ſhalt demen more rightfully that is ſcience of preſence or of inſtance that neuer ne faileth, for whiche it nis not ycleped prouidence, but it ſhuld rather bẽ cleped purueiaunce, which is eſtabliſhed full ferre fro right low thinges, & beholdeth from a ferre al thinges, right as it were fro the hye hyght of thynges. Why aſkeſt thou than, or why diſputeſt thou than ỹ thilke thynges ben doen by neceſſite, whiche that ben yſene & yknowen by the diuine ſight, ſythe that forſothe men ne maken nat thilke thynges neceſſary, whiche that they ſene ben ydon in her ſight, for addeth thy beholding any neceſſite, to thilke thinges whiche thou beholdeſt preſent? B. Naye (ỹ I) P. Certes (ỹ ſhe) than, yf men mighten maken any digne compariſon or collacion of the preſence diuine, and of the preſence of mankind, right ſo as ye ſene ſome thinges in this tempoꝛal preſence, right ſo ſeeth god all thing by his eterne preſence. Wherfore this diuine preſcience ne chaũgeth not the nature of the propertie of thinges, but beholdeth ſoch thinges preſent to him warde, as they ſhulden betyden to you warde in tyme to comen. Ne it ne confoundeth not the iudgement of thinges, but by one ſyght of his thought, he knoweth the thinges to comen, as wel neceſſary as not neceſſarie. Right ſo whan ye ſene togither a man walke on the erthe, and the ſonne a riſẽ in the heuẽ, al be it ſo that ye ſene al togither that one and that other: ye neuertheleſ ye de

men and discernen, that that one is volun tary, and that other is necessary: Right so than the deuine lokinge, beholdinge al thinges vnder him, ne troubleth nat the qualite of thinges that ben certainly present to him warde, but as to the condicion of tyme, for-sothe they ben future, for whiche it followeth that this nys none opinio, but rather a stedfaste knowing ystregthed by sothenesse, that whan that god knoweth any thinge to be, he ne vnwote nat that thilke thynge wantethe necessite to be, this is to sain, that when that god knoweth any thinge to betide, he wote wel that it ne hath no necessite to betide.

And yf thou seist here that thilke thing that god seeth to betide, it ne may nat vnbetide, as who sayth it mote betyde, and thilke thinge that ne may nat vnbetide, it mote betiden by necessite, & that thou streyn me to this name of the necessite. Certes I will well confessen and beknowen a thynge of full sad trouthe, but vnneth shall there anie wight mow sene it or come thereto, but if that he be beholder of the diuine thought, for I wil answere the thus, that thilke thinge that is future when it is referred to the diuine knowinge than it is necessarie. But certes whan it is vnderstanden in his owne kind, men sene it vtterly fre and absolute fro all necessyte. For certes there ben two maners of necessitees, that one necessite is simple, as thus, ỳ it behoueth by necessite that all men be mortall or deedlye. Another necessite is condycionell, as thus, yf thou wost that a man walketh, it behoueth by necessite that he walke, thilke thing than that any wight hath yknowe to be, it ne may nat be none other wyse than he knoweth it to be. But this cõdicion ne draweth not with her thilke necessite simple, for certes this necessite condicionell, the propre nature of it ne maketh it nat, but the adiection of the condicion maketh it. For no necessite ne constraineth a man to gon, ỳ goeth by his proper wil al be it so that whã he goth, that is necessary that he goth. Right on this same maner than, yf that the purueiaunce of god seeth any thinge present, than mote thilke thinge ben by necessyte, all thoughe that it ne haue no necessyte of his owne nature. But certes the futures that betyden by fredon of arbytrie, god seeth hem al togider present. These thynges than if they ben referred to the diuine sight, than ben they maked necessarie by the condicion of the diuine knowinge. But certes, if thilke thinges ben considred by hem selfe, they been absolute of necessitie, and ne forleten not, ne cessen not of the libertie of her owne nature. Than certes, without dout all the thinges shullen ben don whiche that god wote before that they ben to comen and betiden of fre arbitrie, or of free wyll, that al be it so that they betiden, yet algates ne lese they not her proper nature in beynge, by the whiche firste or they weren doen, they hadden power not to haue betidde. Boecius. what is this to saine than (ꝙ I) that thinges ne be not necessary by her proper nature, so that they comen in al her maners in the likenesse of necessie, by condicion of the diuine science? Philosophie. This is the difference (ꝙ she) that tho thinges which ỳ I purposed thee a lytel here before, that is to saine, Sonne a risyng, and the man walking, that ther whiles that thilk thinges ben done, they ne might not ben vndoone. Natheless that one of hem or it was done, it behoueth by necessite that it was doone, but not that other. Right so it is here that the thynges whiche that god hath present, withouten doute they shullen ben, but some of hem discendeth of the nature of thynges, as the sonne arisinge, and some discendeth of the power of the doers, as the manne walkinge. Boecius. Then said I, no wronge, that if these thynges bee referred to the diuine knowing, than ben they necessarie, and if they been cosydred by hem selfe, than been they absolute fro the bonde of necessite. Right so as al thinges that apereth or sheweth to ỳ wittes, if thou referre hem to reason it is vniuersall, and if thou loke it or refer it to it self, than is it singuler. But nowe if thou saiest thus, that if that it be in my power to chaungen my purpose, than shall I voiden the purueisaunce of god, whan parauenture, I shall haue chaunged the thinges whiche that he knoweth before.

Philosophie. Than shall I answeren thus: Certes thou maiste wel chaunge thy purpose, but for as moche as the present sothenesse of the diuine purueiaũce beholdeth that thou maiste chaunge thy purpose, and whether thou chaunge it or no, and whiderward that thou tourne it, thou ne maiste not eschue the diuine prescience, right so thou ne maiste not flid the sight of the presenti ye, although that thou tourne thy self by thy fre wil in to diuers actions. But thou maiste saine ayen to this thus: How shall it than be, shall not ỳ diuine science ben chaunge by my disposi-

cion,

cion, whan that I will one thing nowe, and now another thinge: And thilke prescience semeth it not to entrechaunge stoundes of knowinge, as who saithe, ne shal it not semen to vs, that the diuine prescience entrechaungeth his diuers stoundes of knowinge, so that it knowe sometime one thing, and sometime it knoweth the contrarie of that thing: Philo.

No forsothe (q she) for the deuine sight renneth before and seeth al the futures, and clepeth hem ayen, and retourneth hem to the propre prescience of his propre knowinge, ne he entrechaungeth not, so as thou weneſt the stoundes of his foreknowing, as nowe this, nowe that: but he dwelling aye cometh before, and embraseth at o stroke al the mutacions. And this prescience to comprehenden and to sene al thinges, god ne hath not take it of the betidinges of thinges to comen but of his propre symplicite. And hereby is assoiled thilke thinges ỹ thou puttest a litel here before, that is to saine, that it is vnworthy thing to sain, that our futures yeuen cause of the prescience of God. For certes strength of the deuine science, whiche that embraseth al thinges by his presentary knowing, establisseth maner to all thynges, and it ne oweth not to latter thinges. And sithe ỹ these, thinges ben thus, that is to saine, that necessite is not in thinges by the diuine prescience, thā is ther fredom of arbitrie that dwelleth hole and vnwemmed to mortalmen, ne the lawes ne purposen not wycked medes, and paines to the willinges of men, that ben vnboundē and quite of all necessite: And God beholder and forewetere of al thinges dwelleth aboue, and the present eternite of sight, renneth alwaye wyth the diuers qualite of our dedes, dispensyng or ordeining medes to good men, and tourmētes to wicked men. Ne in ydel ne in vaine ne ben ther not put in god hope and praiers, that ne mowen not ben vnspedeful, ne without effecte, whan they ben rightful.

Withstande than and eschewe thou vyces, worschippe and loue thou vertues, areyse thy corage to rightful hopes, yelde thou humble praiers and highe. Greate necessyte of prowesse and of vertue, is encharged and commaunded to you if ye nil not dissimulen, sith that ye worchen and doone, that is to saine, your dedes and youre werkes before ỹ eyen of the iudge, that seeth ỹ also that demeth al thinges. Deo gracias.

¶ Thus endeth the boke of Boecius of the consolaciō of Philosophie.

¶ The dreame of

Chaucer.

I Haue greate wonder by this light
Howe I lyue, for daye ne night
I maye not slepe, welny nought
I haue so many an ydle thought
Purely for defaute of slepe
That by my trouth, I take no kepe
Of nothing, howe it cometh or gothe
Ne me nys nothing lefe nor lothe
Al is iliche goood to me
Joye or sorowe, where so it be
For I haue felinge in nothing
But as it were a maled thing
Alday in pointe to fall adoun
For sorowful ymaginacion
Is alway wholy in my minde
And well ye wote, againste kinde
It were to liuen in this wise
For nature wolde not suffise
To none erthy creature
Not longe tyme to endure
Without slepe, and be in sorowe
And I ne may, ne night ne morowe
Slepe, and this melancolye
And dreede I haue for to die
Defaute of slepe and heuinesse
Hath slaine my spirite of quickenesse
That I haue lost al lustiheed
Soche fantasies ben in mine heed
So I not what is best to do
But men might aske me whi so
I may not slepe, and what me is
But natheles, who aske thys
Lesethe his asbyng trewly
My seluen can not tel why
The sothe, but trewly as I gesse
I holde it be a sickenesse
That I haue suffred this eyght yere
And yet my boote is neuer the nere
For there is physicien but one
That may me heale, but that is done
Passe we ouer vntil efte
That wil not be, mote nedes be lefte
Our first mater is good to kepe
So whan I sawe I might not slepe
Thnowe late, this other night
Upon my bedde I sate vpright
And bade one reche me a booke

A Ro-

I Romaunce, and it me toke
To rede, and driue the night away
For me thought it beter play
Than play either at Chesse or tables
And in this boke were written fables
That Clerkes had in olde time
And other poetes, put in rime
To rede, and for to be in minde
While men loued the lawe of kinde
This boke ne speake, but of sothe thinges
Of quenes lyues, and of kinges
And many other thinges smale
Amonge al this I fonde a tale
That me thought a wonder thing.
This was the tale: There was a king
That hight Seies, and had a wife
The best that might beare lyfe
And this quene hight Alcione
So it befil, thereafter sone
This king wol wenden ouer see
To tellen shortly, whan that he
Was in the see, thus in this wise
Sothe a tempest gan to ryse
That brake her maste, and made it fal
And clefte her ship, and dreint hem al
That neuer was founde, as it telles
Borde ne man, ne nothing elles
Right thus this king Seyes loste his life
Nowe for to speake of Alcione his wife
This ladie that was lefte at home
Hath wonder, that the kinge ne come
Home, for it was a longe terme
Anon her herte began to yerne
And for that her thought euermo
It was not wele, her thought so
She longed so after the king
That certes it were a pitous thing
To tel her hertely sorowful lyfe
That she had, this noble wife
For him alas, she loued alderbest
Anon she sent both east and west
To seke him, but they founde nought
Alas (q she) that I was wrought
And where my lorde my loue be deed?
Certes I nyl neuer eate breed
I make a bowe to my god here
But I mowe of my lorde here
Sothe sorowe this lady to her tok
That trewly, I that made this boke
Had sothe pite, and sothe routhe
To rede her sorowe, that by my trouthe
I farde the worse al the morowe
After to thinken on her sorowe
So whan this lady coude here no worde
That no man myght finde her lorde
Ful ofte she swowned, and saide alas
For sorow, ful nigh woode she was
Ne she coude no rede but one
But downe on knees she sate anone
And wept, that pite was to here
A mercy swete lady dere
(q she) to Juno her goddesse
Helpe me out of this distresse
And yeue me grace my lorde to se
Soone, or wete where so he be
Or howe he fareth, or in what wise
And I shal make you sacrifice
And holly yours become I shal
With good wil, body, herte and al
And but thou wolte this lady swete
Sende me grace to slepe and mete
In my slepe some certaine sweuen
Where through that I may knowe euen
Whether my lorde be quicke or deed
With that worde she hinge downe the heed
And fel in a swoune, as colde as stone
Her women caught her vp anone
And brought her in bed al naked
And she forweped and forwaked
Was wery, and thus the deed slepe
Fel on her, or she toke kepe
Through Juno, that had herde her boone
That made her to slepe soone
For as she praide, right so was don
In dede, for Juno right anon
Called thus her messangere
To do her eraunde, and he come nere
Whan he was come, she bad him thus
Go bet (q Juno) to Morpheus
Thou knowest him wel, the god of slepe
Nowe vnderstande wel, and take kepe
Say thus on my halfe, that he
Go fast in to the great see
And bid him that on al thinge
He take vp Seis body the kinge
That lieth ful pale, and nothinge rody
Byd him crepe in to the body
And do it gone to Alcione
The quene, there she lyeth alone
And she we her shortely it is no nay
Howe it was dreynt this other day
And do the body speake right so
Right as it was wonned to do
The whiles that it was alyue
Go nowe fast, and hye the blyue.
This messanger toke leue and went
Upon his way, and neuer he stente
Tyl he came to the darke valey
That stante bytwene rockes twey
There neuer yet grewe corne ne gras

Ne tree, ne naught that ought was
Beest ne man, ne nought elles
Saue that there were a fewe welles
Came renning fro the clyffes adowne
That made a deedly sleppynge sowne
And rennen downe right by a caue
That was vnder a rocke ygraue
Amyd the valey wonder depe
There these goddes lay a slepe
Morpheus and Eclympasteyze
That was the god of slepes heire
That slepte, and did none other werke
This caue was also as derke
As hel pitte, ouer all aboute
They had good leyser for to route
To dye who might slepe best
Some hinge her chinne vpon her brest
And slepte vpright her heed yhed
And some lay naked in her bed
And slepte whiles their daies last
This messaunger come renning fast
And cried ho ho, awake anone
It was for naught, there herde him none
I wake (quod he) who lieth there
And blewe his horne right in her eere
And cried awaketh wonder hie
This god of slepe, with his one eye
Cast vp, and asked who clepeth there
It am I (quod this messangere)
June bade thou shuldest gone
And tolde him what he shuld done
As I haue tolde you here before
It is no nede reherse it more
And wente his way whan he had saide
Anone this god of slepe abraide
Out of his slepe and gan to go
And did as he had bidde him do
Toke vp the deed body soone
And bare it forth to Alcione
His wife the quene, there as she lay
Right euen a quarter before day
And stode right at her beddes fete
And called her right as she hete
By name, and said: My swete wife
I wake, let be your sorowful lyfe
For in your sorow, there lyth no rede
For certes swete loue, I am but dede
Ye shall me neuer on lyue yse
But good swete herte that ye
Bury my body, for soche a tide
Ye mowe it finde, the see beside
And farewel swete, my worldes blisse
I pray god your sorowe lysse
To lytel while our blisse lasteth
With that her eyen vp she casteth
And sawe naught, alas (quod she) for sorowe
And died within the thirde morowe
But what she said more in that swowe
I may nat tel you as nowe
It were to longe for to dwel
My first matere I wil you tel
Wherfore I haue tolde this thinge
Of Alcione, and Seys the kinge
For thus moche dare I say well
I had be doluen euerydel
And deed, right through defaute of slepe
Yf I ne had red, and take kepe
Of this tale next before
And I wil tel you wherfore
For I ne might for bote ne bale
Slepe, or I had redde this tale
Of this dreinte Seis the kinge
And of the goddes of slepinge
Whan I had red this tale wele
And ouerloked it euerydele
Me thought wonder, if it were so
For I had neuer herde speake or tho
Of no goddes, that coude make
Men to slepe, ne for to wake
And I ne knewe neuer god but one
And in my game, I said anone
And yet me lyst, right euil to pley
Rather than that I shulde dey
Through defaute of slepinge thus
I wolde gyue thilke Morpheus
Or that goddesse dame Juno
Or some wight els, I ne rought who
To make me slepe, and haue some rest
I will giue him the alther best
Yefte, that euer he abode his lyue
And here onwarde, right nowe as bliue
If he woll make me slepe a lite
Of downe of pure Doues white
I wol yeue him a fether bed
Raied with gold, and right wel cled
In fine blacke Sattin doutremere
And many a pilowe, and euery bere
Of clothe of raines to slepe on softe
Him thare not nede to turne ofte
And I wol yeue him al that falles
To his chambre and to his halles
I wol do painte with pure golde
And tapite hem ful many folde
Of one flute this shal he haue
If I wiste where were his caue
If he can make me slepe sone
As did the goddesse, quene Alcione
And thus this ylke god Morpheus
May winne of me mo fees thus
Than euer he wanne, and to Juno

That

That is his goddesse, I shall so do
I trowe that she shal holde her paide
I had vnneth that worde isaide
Right thus as I haue tolde you
That sodeinly I nyst howe
Soche a luste anone me toke
To slepe, that right vpon my boke
I fel a slepe, and therwith euen
Me mette so inly soche a sweuen
So wonderfull, that neuer yet
I trowe no man had the wit
To conne wel my sweuen rede
No nought Joseph without drede
Of Egypthe, he that rad so
The kinge metinge Pharao
No more than coude the lest of vs
Ne nat scarsly Macrobeus
He that wrote al the auision
That he met kinge Scipion
The noble man the Affrican
Soche meruailles fortuned than
I trowe a rede my dremes euen
Lo thus it was, this was my sweuen.
Me thought thus, that it was Maye
And in the dawning there I lay
Me met thus in my bed al naked
And loked forthe, for I was waked
With smale foules a great hepe
That had afraied me out of my slepe
Through noise, and swetnesse of her songe
And as me met, they sate amonge
Upon my chambre rofe without
Upon the tyles ouer al about
And eueriche songe in his wise
The moste solempne seruise
Be note, that euer man I trowe
Had herde, for some of hem songe lowe
Some high, and al of one accorde
To tel shortly at o worde
Was neuer herde so swete steuen
But it had be a thinge of heuen
So merie a sowne, so swete entunes
That certes for the towne of Tewnes
I nolde, but I had herdes hem singe
For al my chambre can to ringe
Through singing of her ermony
For instrument, nor melody
Was no where herde, yet halfe so swete
Nor of acorde halfe so mete
For there was none of hem that fained
To singe, for eche of hem him pained
To finde out many crafty notes
They ne spared nat her throtes
And soth to saine, my chambre was
Ful wel depainted, and with glas
Were al the windowes, wel yglased
Ful clere, and nat an hole ycrased
That to beholde it was great ioy
For holly al the story of Troy
Was in the glasinge ywrought thus
Of Hector, and of kinge Priamus
Of Achilles, and of kinge Lamedon
And eke of Medea, and of Jason
Of Paris, Heleine, and of Lauine
And al the walles with colours fine
Were painte, bothe texte and glose
And al the Romaunte of the rose
My wyndowes weren shit echone
And through the glasse the sunne shone
Upon my bed with bright bemes
With many glad gildy stremes
And eke the welkin was so faire
Blewe, bright, clere was the ayre
And ful atempre, for sothe it was
For neither to colde, ne hote it nas
Ne in al the welkin was no clowde
And as I lay thus wonder lowde
Me thought I herde and hunte blowe
Tassay his great horne, and for to knowe
Whether it was clere, or horse of sowne
And I herde goynge bothe vp and downe
Men, horse, houndes, and other thinge
And al men speake of huntinge
How they wold slee the harte with strength
And how the harte had vpon length
So moche enbosed, I not nowe what
Anon right whan I herde that
How that they wolde, on huntinge gone
I was right glad, and vp anone
Toke my horse, and forth I wente
Out of chambre, I neuer stente
Tyl I come to the felde without
There ouer toke I a great rout
Of hunters, and eke of foresters
And many relaies and limers
And hied hem to the forest fast
And I with hem, so at the last
I asked one lad, a lymere
Say felowe, who shal hunte here
(q I) and he answered ayen
Sir, the Emperour Octonyen
(q he) and is here fast by
A goddes halfe, in good tyme (q I)
Go we fast, and gan to ride
Whan we come to the forest side
Euery man dyd right soone
As to hutinge fel to doone
The maister hunte, anone fote hote
With his horne blewe three mote
At the vncouplinge of his hondes

Within a while, the harte founde is
I halowed, and rechased fast
Longe time, and so at the last
This harte roused and stale away
Fro al the houndes a pryuy way
The houndes had ouer shot him all
And were vpon a defaulte yfal
Therwith the hont wonder fast
Blewe a forloyn at the laste
I was go walked fro my tre
And as I went, there came by me
A whelpe, that fawned me as I stoode
That had yfolowed, and coude no goode
It came and crepte to me as lowe
Right as it had me yknowe
Held down his heed, and loyned his eares
And laide al smothe downe his heeres
I wolde haue caught it anone
It fled, and was fro me gone
As I him folowed, and it forth went
Downe by a floury grene it went
Ful thick of grasse, ful softe and swete
With floures fele fare vnder fete
And lytel vsed, it semed thus
For bothe Flora, and zepherus
They two, that make floures growe
Had made her dwelling there I trowe
For it was on to beholde
As though the erthe enuye wolde
To be gayer than the heuen
To haue mo floures soche seuen
As in the welken sterres be
It had forget the pouerte
Had winter, thrugh his colde morowes
That made it suffre, and his sorowes
Al was forieten, and that was sene
For all the woode was woren grene
Swetnesse of dewe, had made it waxe
It is no nede eke for to axe
Where there were many grene greues
Of thicke of trees, so ful of leues
And euery tree stode by him selue
Fro other, wel ten foote or twelue
So great trees, so huge of strength
Of fourty or fifthy fedom length
Cleane without bowe or sticke
With croppes brode, and eke as thicke
They were not an ynche a sonder
That it was shadde ouer all vnder
And many an hart, and many an hinde
Was both before me, and behinde
Of fawnes, sowers, buckes, does
Was ful the wodde, and many roes
And many squirreles, that sete
Ful high vpon the trees and ete
And in her maner made festes
Shortly, it was so ful of beestes
That though Argus the noble countour
Sate to reken in his countour
And recken with his figures ten
For by tho figures newe al ken
If they be crafty, reken and nombre
And tel of euery thing the nombre
Yet shulde he faile to reken euen
The wonders me met in my sweuen
But forthe I romed, right wonder faste
Downe the woode, so at the laste
I was ware of a man in blacke
That sate, and had yturned his backe
To an ooke, an huge tree
Lorde thought I, who may that be
What eyleth him to sitten here
Anon right, I went nere
Than founde I sitte, euen vpright
A wonder welfaring knight
By the maner me thought so
Of good mokel, and right yonge therto
Of the age of foure and twenty yere
Upon his berde, but litel heere
And he was clothed al in blacke
I stalked euen vnto his backe
And there I stode, as stil as ought
The sothe to say, he saw me nought
For why he hinge his heed adowne
And with a deedly, sorowful sowne
He made of rime, ten verses or twelue
Of a complainte, to him selue
The moste pite, the most routhe
That euer I herde, for by trouthe
It was great wonder that nature
Might suffre any creature
To haue sothe sorow, and he not deed
Ful pitous pale, and nothing reed
He said a lay, a maner longe
Without note, without songe
And was this, for ful wel I can
Reherse it, right thus it began
I haue of sorowe so great wone
That ioye get I neuer none
Nowe that I se my lady bright
Whiche I haue loued, with all my might
Is fro me deed, and is agone
And thus in sorowe, lefte me alone
Alas dethe, what eyleth the
That thou noldest haue taken me
Whan that thou tokest my lady swete
Of all goodnes, she had none mete
That was so faire, so freshe, so fre
So good, that men may wel se
Whan he had made thus his complainte

His sorowful hert, gan fast fainte
And his spirites weren dede
The bloode was fledde, for pure drede
Downe to his herte, to maken him warme
For wel it feled the herte had harme
To wete eke, why it was adradde
By kinde, and for to make it gladde
For it is membre principal
Of the body, and that made al
His hewe chaunge, and were grene
And pale, for there no bloode is sene
In no maner lymme of his
Anon therwith, whan I sawe this
He farde thus yuel, there he sete
I went and stode right at his fete
And grette him, but he spake nought
But argued with his owne thought
And in his witte disputed faste
Why, and howe his lyfe might laste
Him thought his sorowes were so smerte
And lay so colde vpon his herte
So through his sorowe, and holy thought
Made him that he herde me nought
For he had welnye lost his minde
Though Pan, that men clepeth god of kinde
Were for his sorowes neuer so wrothe
But at the last, to saine right sothe
He was ware of me, howe I stoode
Before him, and did of my hoode
And had ygret him, as I best coude
Debonairly, and nothing loude
He said, I pray the be not wrothe
I herde the not, to saine the sothe
Ne I sawe the not, sir truely
Ay good sir, no force (quod I
I am right sory, if I haue ought
Distroubled you, out of your thought
Forgeue me, if I haue misse take
Yes, thamendes is light to make
(quod he) for there lithe none therto
There is nothing missaide, nor do
Lo howe goodly spake this knight
As it had be another wight
And made it neither tough ne queint
And I sawe that, and gan me aqueint
With him, and founde him so tretable
Right wounder shylful and reasonable
As me thought, for all his bale
Anon right, I gan finde a tale
To him, to loke where I might ought
Haue more knowleging of his thought
Sir (quod I) this game is done
I holde that this hert be gone
These huntes can him no where se
I do no force therof (quod he
My thought is theron neuer a dele
By our lorde (quod I) I trowe you wele
Right so me thinketh by your chere
But sir, o thing woll ye here
Me thinketh in grerat sorowe I you se
But certes sir, if that ye
Wolde aught discure me your wo
I wolde, as wise god helpe me so
Amende it, if I can or may
Ye mowe proue it by assay
For by my trouthe, to make you hole
I wol do al my power hole
And telleth me, of your sorowes smerte
Paraunter it may ease your herte
That semeth ful sythe vnder yout side
With that he loked on me a side
As who saithe nay, that nyl not be
Graunt mercy good frende (quod he)
I thanke the, that thou woldest so
But it may neuer the rather be do
No man may my sorowe glade
That maketh my hewe to fal and fade
And hath myn vnderstanding lorne
That me is wo, that I was borne
May nought make my sorowes slyde
Not all the remedies of Ouide
Ne Orpheus, god of melodie
Ne Dedalus, with his playes slye
Ne heale me, may no phisicien
Nought Ipocras, ne Galien
Me is wo, that I liue houres tweine
But who so wol assaye hem selue
Whether his hert can haue pite
Of any sorowe, let him se me
I wretche, that dethe hath made al naked
Of al the blisse that euer was maked
I wrothe, werse of al wightes
That hate my dayes, and my nightes
My lyfe, my lustes, be me lothe
For al fare and I be wrothe
The pure deth is so ful my foe
That I wolde die, it wil not foe
For whan I folowe it, it wil flye
I wolde haue him, it nil not me
This is paine without reed
Alway dyenge and be not deed
That Tesyphus that lyeth in hel
May not of more sorowe tel
And who so wiste al, by my trouthe
My sorowe, but he hadde routhe
And pyte of my sorowes smerte
That man hath a fendely herte
For who so seeth me first on morowe
May sayne he hath mette with sorow
For I am sorowe, and sorowe is I

Alas,

Alas, and I wyl tel the why
My sorowe is tourned to playnyng
And al my laughter to wepyng
My glad thoughtes, to heuinesse
In trauaile is myn ydlenesse
And eke my rest, my wele is wo
My good is harme, and euermo
In wrathe is tourned my playeng
And my delite in to sorowing
Myn heale is turned in to sickenesse
In drede is al my sykernesse
To derke is turned al my lyght
My wytte is foly, my day is night
My loue is hate, my slepe wakyng
My mirth and meles, is fasting
My countenaunce is nicete
And al abawed, where so I be
My peace pleding, and in werre
Alas, howe might I fare werre
My boldenesse is turned to shame
For false fortune, hath played a game
At the chesse with me, alas the while
The trayteresse false and ful of gyle
That al behoteth, and nothing halte
She gothe vpright, and yet she halte
That baggeth soule, and loketh fayre
The dispitous debonaire
That scorneth many a creature
In ydole of false purtraiture
Is she, for she wol sone wryen
She is the monstres heed ywryen
As filthe, ouer strowed with floures
Her mokke worship and her floures
To lyen for that is her nature
Without faith, lawe, or mesure
She false is, and euer laughing
With one eye, and that other weping
That is brought vp, she set al downe
I liken her to the Scorpiowne
That is a false flateryng beest
For with his deed he maketh feest
But al amyd his flateringe
With his taile he wil stynge
And enuenim, and so wil she
She is the enuious charite
That is aye false, and semeth wele
So turneth she her false whele
Aboute, for it is nothing stable
Nowe by the fyre, nowe at table
Ful many one hath she thus yblent
She is playe of enchauntement
That semeth one, and is not so
The false theke, what hath she do
Tro west thou, by our lorde I wil the say
At the Chesse with me she gan to play
With her false draughtes ful diuers
She stale on me, and tolke my fers
And whan I sawe my fers away
Alas I couth no lenger play
But sayd, farewel swete ywis
And farewel al that euer there is
Therwith fortune said, cheke here
And mate in the myd poynt of the chechere
With a paune errant, alas
Ful craftyer to play she was
Than Athalus that made the game
First of the Chesse, so was is name
But god wolde I had ones or twise
I conde, and knowe the ieoperdise
That coude the Greke Pithagores
I shulde haue plaide thebet at ches
And kept my feers the bet therby.
And though wherto, for trewly
I holde that wisshe not worthe a fire
It had be neuer the bet for me
For fortune can so many a wyle
Ther be but fewe can her begile
And eke she is the lasse to blame
My selfe I wolde haue do the same
Before god, had I been as she
She ought the more excused be
For this I say yet more therto
Had I be god, and might haue do
My wyl, whan she my feers caught
I wolde haue drawe the same draught
For al so wise, god gyue me reste
I dare wel swere, she toke the beste
But throughe that draught I haue lorne
My bysse, alas that I was borne
For euermore I trowe trewly
For al my wil, my lucke holly
Is turne, but ye, what to done
By our Lorde it is to dye sone
For nothinge I leaue it nought
But lyue and dye, right in this thought
For there nys planet in firmamente
Ne in ayre ne in erthe none elemente
That they ne yeue me a yefte chone
Of wepyng whan I am alone
For whan that I auise me wele
And bethinke me euerydele
How that there lieth in reckeninge
I nmy sorowe for nothinge
And howe there liueth no gladnesse,
May gladde me of my distresse
And howe I haue lacke sufficiaunce
And therto I haue no pleasaunce
Than may I say, I haue right nought
And whan al this falleth in my thought
Alas, than am I ouercome,

For that is done, is not come
I haue more sorowe than Tantale
And I herde him tel this tale
Thus pitously, as I you tell
Unneth myght I lenger dwell
It did myn herte so moche wo
I good sir (quod I) say nat so
Haue some pite on your nature
That fourmed you to creature
Remembreth you of Socrates
For he ne counteth not thre strees
Of nought that fortune coude do
No (quod I) I can not so
Why good sir, yes parde (quod I)
Ne say not so for truely
Though ye had lost the feerses twelue
And ye for sorowe murdred your selue
Ye shulde be dampned in this case
By as good right as Medea was
That slough her children for Jason
And Phillis also, for Demophon
Hing her self, so wela way
For he had broke his terme day
To come to her: Another rage
Had Dido, the quene eke of Cartage
That slough her self, for Eneas
Was false, whiche a foole she was
And Ecquo dyed, for Narcisus
Nolde nat loue her, and right thus
Hath many an other foly done
And for Dalida died Sampsone
That slough he him selfe with a pilere
But there is no man a liue here
Wolde for her feeres make this wo
Why so (quod he) it is not so
Thou wotest ful lytel what thou menest
I haue lost more than thou wenest
Howe may that be (quod I)
Good sir, tel me al holly
In what wise, howe, why, and wherfore
That ye haue thus your blisse lore
Blithely (quod he) come sir doun
I tel the vpon a condicion
That thou shalte hollywith all thy wit
Do thyne entente to herken it
yes sir: Swere thy trouthe therto
Gladly do than holde here to
I shal right blithely, so god me saue
Holly with al the witte I haue
Here you as wel as I can
A goddes halfe (quod he) and began
Sir (quod he) sith firste I couthe
Haue any maner witte fro youthe
Or kindely vndestandinge
To comprehende in any thinge
What loue was, in mine owne wit
Bredelesse I haue euer yet
Be tributary, and yeue rente
To loue holly, with good entente
And thrught plesaunce be come his thral
With good wil, body, herte and al
Al this I put in his seruage
As to my lorde, and dyd homage
And full deuoutly I praide hym tho
He shulde beset myne herte so
That it plesaunce to him were
And worship to my lady dere
And this was long, and many a yere
(Er that min hert was set o where)
That I dyd thus, and nisse why
I trowe it came me kindely
Paraunter I was therto moste able
As a white wal, or a table
For it is redy to cathe and take
Al that men will therin make
Whether so men will portrey or painte
Be the werkes neuer so quainte.
And thilke tyme I fared right so
I was able to haue lerned tho
And to haue conde, as wel or better
Paraunter, either arte or letter
But for loue came first in my thought
Therfore I forgate it nought
I chees loue to my first craste
Therfore it is with we laste
For why, I toke it of so yonge age
That malice had my corage
Not that time, turned to nothing
Through to mokel knowleging
For that tyme, youth my maistresse
Gouerned me in ydelnesse
For it was in my first youthe
And tho ful litel good I couthe
For al my werkes were flittyng
That time, and al my thought variyng
Al were to me yliche goode
That knewe I tho, but thus it stode.
It happed that I came on a day
In to a place, there that I sey
Trewly the faireste companie
Of ladies, that euer man with eye
Had sene togithers in o place
Shal I clepe it happe, either grace
That brought me there, not but fortune
That is to lien ful comune
The falle traiteresse peruerse
God wolde I coulde clepe her werse
For now she worcheth me ful wo
And I wol tel sone why so.
Amonges these ladies thus echone

Sothe to saine, I sawe one
That was lyke none of the route
For I dare swere, without doute
That as the sommers sonne bryght
Is fairer, clerer, and hath moze lyght
Than any other planet in heuen
The moone, or the sterres seuen
For al the wozlde so had she
Surmounten hem al of beaute
Of maner, and comlynesse
Of stature, and of wel set gladnesse
Of goodly heed, and so wel besey
Shortly, what shal I moze sey
By god and by his holowes twelue
It was my swete, right al her selue
She had so stedfast countenaunce
So noble porte, and maintenaunce
And Loue, that wel harde my bone
Had espied me thus sone
That the ful sone in my thought
As helpe me god, so was I cought
So sodainly, that I ne toke
No maner counsaile, but at her loke
And at min herte, for why her eyen
So gladly I trowe myn herte seyne
That purely tho, min owne thought
Said, it were better serue her for nought
Than with another to be wele
And it was sothe, for euery dele
I wil anone right tel the why
I sawe her daunce so comely
Carol and sing so swetely
Laught, and play so womanly
And loke so debonairly
So goodly speke and so frendely
That certes I trowe that euermoze
Nas sene so blisful a tresoze
For euery heer on her heed
Sothe to say it was not reed
Ne neither yelowe ne browne it nas
Me thought moste like golde it was
And whiche eyen my lady had
Debonaire, good, glad, and sad
Simple, of good mokel, not to wide
Therto her loke nas not aside
Ne ouertwhart, but beset so wele
It dzewe and toke by euerydele
Al that on her gan beholde
Her eyen semed anone she wolde
Haue mercy, folly wenden so
But it was neuer the rather do
It nas no counterfeted thinge
It was her owne pure loking
That the goddesse dame Nature
Had made hem open by measure
And close, for were she neuer so glad
Her loking was not lolishe spzad
Ne wildely, though that she plaide
But euer me thought her eyen saide
By god my wzathe is al forzeue
Therwith her liste so well to liue
That dulnesse was of her adzad
She nas to sobze ne to glad
In all thinges moze measure
Had neuer I trowe creature
But many one with her loke she herte
And that sate her ful lytel at herte
For she knewe nothinge of her thought
But whether she knewe, or knewe it nought
Algate she ne wzought of hem a stree
To get her loue no nere nas he
That woned at home, than he in Inde
The forzmest was alway behinde
But good folke ouer al other
She loued, as man may his bzother
Of whiche loue she was wonder large
In skilful places that bere charge
But whiche a bisage had she therto
Alas my herte is wonder wo
That I ne can discriuen it
My lacketh both Englishe and wit
For to bndo it at the ful
And eke my spirites ben so dull
So great a thinge for to deuise
I haue not wit that can suffyse
To comprehende her beaute
But thus moche I dare saine that she
Was white, rody freshe and likely hewed
And euery day her beaute newed
And nyghe her face was alderbeste
For certes nature had soche leste
To make that faire, that trewly she
Was her chefe patron of beaute
And chefe ensample of al her werke
And monstre, for be it neuer so derke
Me thinketh I se her euer mo
And yet moze ouer, though al tho
That euer liued, were nowe a lyue
Ne wolde haue founde to discriue
In al her face, a wicked signe
For it was sad, simple, and benigne
And soche a goodly swete speche
Had that swete, my lyues leche
So frendely, and so well ygrounded
Upon al reason, so wel ifounded
And so tretable to al good
That I dare swere wel by the rood
Of eloquence was neuer fonde
So swete a sowning faconde
Ne trewer tonged, ne scorned lasse

Ne bet coude heale, that by the masse
I durste sweare though the Pope it songe
That ther was neuer yet through her tonge
Man ne woman greatly harmid
As for her, was al harme hid
Ne lasse flatering in her worde
That purely her simple recorde
Was founde as trewe as any bonde
Or trouthe, of any mannes honde
Ne chide she coulde neuer a dele
That knoweth al the worlde ful wele
But soche a fairenesse of a necke
Had that swete, that bone nor brecke
Nas there none seen, that misse satte
It was white, smothe, streight, & pure flatte
Without hole, or canel bone
And by seming, she had none
Her throte, as I haue nowe memoire
Semed as a rounde tour of yuoire
Of good greatnesse, and not to grete
And faire white she hete
That was my ladies name right
She was therto faire and bright
She had not her name wronge
Right faire sholders, and body longe
She had, and armes euer lith
Fattishe fleshy, nat great ther with
Right white handes, and nailes rede
Rounde brestes: And of good brede
Her hippes were, a streight flatte backe
I knewe on her none other lacke
That al her limmes nere pure sewing
In as ferre as I had knowing
Therto she coulde so wel playe
What that her lyste, that I dare saye
That was lyke to torche bright
That euery man may take of light
Ynough, and it hath neuer the lesse
Of maner and of comlynesse
Right so farde my lady dere
For euery wight of her manere
Moght catche ynough, if that he wolde
Yf he had eyen her to beholde
For I dare sweare wel, if that she
Had among tenne thousande be
She wolde haue be at the beste
A chefe myroure of al the feste
Though they had stonde in a rowe
To mennes eyen, that coulde haue knowe
For where so men had plaide, or waked
Me thought the felowshippe as naked
Without her, that I sawe ones
As a crowne without stones
Trewly she was to min eye
The solein Fenix of Arabye
For there liueth neuer but one
Ne suche as she, ne knowe I none
To speke of goodnesse, trewly she
Had as moche debonairte
As euer had Hester in the Bible
And more, if more were possible
And sothe to saine, therwithal
She hadde a witte so general
So hole enclined to al goode
That al her witte was sette by the roode
Without malyce, vpon gladnesse
And therto I sawe neuer yet a lesse
Harmful, than she was in doing
I say not that she ne hadde knowyng
What harme was, or els she
Had coulde no good, so thinketh me
And trewly, for to speake of trouthe
But she had had, it had be routhe
Therof she had so moche her dele
And I dare saine, and swere it wele
That trouthe him selfe, ouer al and al
Had chose his maner principal
In her, that was his resting place
Therto she had the moste grace
To haue stedfaste perseueraunce
And ease attempre gouernaunce
That euer I knewe, or wiste yet
So pure suffraunt was her wit
And reason gladly she vnderstode
It folowed wel, she coulde goode
She vsed gladly to do wele
These were her maners euery dele
Therwith she loued so wel right
She wronge do woulde to no wight
No wight might do her no shame
She loued so wel her owne name
Her lust to holde no wight in honde
Ne be thou siker, she wolde not fonde
To holde no wight in balaunce
By halfe worde, ne by countenaunce
But if men wolde vpon her lye
Ne sende men in to Walakye
To Pruise, and to Tartarie
To Alisaundrie, ne in to Turkye
And bidde him fast, anon that he
Go hoodlesse in to the drie see
And come home by the Carrenare
And sir, be nowe ryght ware
That I may of you here saine
Murshippe, or that ye come againe
She ne vsed no soche knackes smale
But therfore that I tel my tale
Right on this same, I haue saide
Was holly al my loue laide
For certes she was that swete wife

My sufficiaunce, my lufte, my life
Myn hope myn heale, and al blesse
My worldes welfare, and my goddesse
And I holly hers, and euery dele
By our lorde (quod I) I trowe you wele
Hardly your loue was wel beset
I not howe it might haue do bet
Bet, ne not so wel (quod he)
I trowe sir (quod I) parde, &
Nay leue it wel: Sir so do I
I leue you wel, that trewly
you thought that she was the best
And to beholde, the alderfairest
Who so had loked her with your eyen
With myn, nay al that her seyen
Said and swore, it was so
And though they ne had, I wolde tho
Haue loued best my lady fre
Though I had had al the beaute
That euer had Alcipiades
And al the strength of Hercules
And thereto had the worthinesse
Of Alisaunder, and al the richesse
That euer was in Babiloine
In Cartage, or in Macedoine
Or in Rome, or in Niniue &
And therto also hardy be
As was Hector, so haue I ioye
That Achilles slough at Troye
And therfore was he slayne also &
In a temple, for bothe two
Were slaine, he and Antilegius
And so saithe Dares Fregius
For loue of Polixena
Or ben as wise as Pynerua
I wolde euer, without drede
Haue loued her, for I muste nede
Nede? Nay trewly I gabbe nowe
Nought nede, and I wol tellen howe
For of good wil myn herte it wolde
And eke to loue her, I was holde
As for the fairest and the beste
She was as good, so haue I reste
As euer was Penelope of Grece
Or as the noble wife Lucrece
That was the beste, he telleth thus
The Romine Titus Liuius
She was as good, and nothing like
Though her stories be autentike
Algate she was as trewe as she
But wherfore that I tel the
Whan I first my lady sey
I was right yonge, sothe to sey
And ful great nede I had to lerne
Whan myn herte wolde yerne
To loue it was a great empryse
But as my wite wolde beste suffise
After my yonge childely wit
Without drede I beset it
To loue her in my beste wise
To do her worship, and the seruise
That I coude tho, by my trouthe
Without faining, either slouthe
For wonder faine, I wolde her se
So mokell it amended me
That whan I sawe her amorowe
I was warished of al my sorowe
Of al day after, tel it were eue
Me thought nothinge might me greue
Were my sorowes neuer so smerte
And yet she syt so in min herte
That by my trouthe, I nolde nought
For al this worlde, out of my thought
Leaue my lady, no trewly
Nowe by my trouthe sir (quod I)
Me thinketh ye haue soche a chaunce
As wisste, without repentaunce
Repentaunce, nay sye (quod he)
Shulde I nowe repent me
To loue, nay certes than were I wel
Worse than was Achitofel
Or Antenor, so haue I ioye
The traitour that betraied Troye
Or the false Genellon
He that purchased the traison
Of Roulande, and of Oliuere
Nay, wile I am a liue here
I nyl forfet her neuer mo
Nowe good sir (quod I) tho
ye haue wel tolde me here before
It is no nede to reherse it more
Howe ye sawe her first, and where
But wolde ye tel me the manere
To her, whiche was your first speche
Therof I wolde you beseche
And howe she knewe first your thought
Whether ye loued her, or nought
And telleth me eke, what ye haue lore
I herde you tel here before
Ye saide, thou notest what thou menest
I haue loste more than thou wenest
What losse is that (quod I tho)
Nil she not loue you, is it so
Or haue ye ought done amis
That she hath lefte you, is it this
For goddes loue tel me al
Before god (quod he) and I shal
I say right as I haue saide
On her was al my loue laide
And yet she nisse it not neuer a dele

Not longe tyme, leue it wele
For be right lyker, I durst nought
For al this worlde, tel her my thought
Ne I wolde haue wrathed her trewly
For wost thou why, she was lady
Of the body that had the herte
And who so hath that may not asterte
But for to kepe me fro ydelnesse
Trewly I dyd my busynesse
To make songes as I beste coude
And ofte time I songe hem loude
And made songes, this a great dele
Although I coude nat make so wele
Songes ne knewe the arte al
As coude Lamekes sone Tubal
That founde out first the arte of songe
For as his brothers hamers ronge
Upon his anuelt vp and downe
Therof he toke the first sownne
But grekes saine of Pithagoras
That he the first finder was
Of the arte, Auroza telleth so
But therof no force of hem two
Algates songes thus I made
Of my felyng, min herte to glade
And lo, this was alther first
I not where it were the werst
Lorde it maketh min herte light
Whan I thinke on that swete wight
That is so semely on to se
And wisshe to god it might so be
That she wolde holde me for her knight
By lady, that is so faire and bright
Nowe haue I tolde the, soth to say
By first songe vpon a day
I bethought me what wo
And sorowe that I suffred tho
For her, and yet she wiste it nought
Ne tel her durst I not my thought
Alas thaught I, I can no rede
And but I tel her, I am but dede
And if I tel her, to say right sothe
I am a dradde she wol be wrothe
Alas, what shal I than do
In this debate I was so wo
That thought myne herte brast a twaine
So at the laste, sothe for to saine
I bethought me that Nature
Ne formed neuer in creature
So muche beaute trewly
And bountie, without mercy
In hope of that, my tale I tolde
With sorowe, as that I neuer shoulde
For nedes, and maugre myne heed
I must haue tolde her, or be deed
I not wel howe that I began
Ful yuel reherce it I can
And ele as helpe me god withal
I trowe it was in the dismal
That was the ten woundes of Egypte
For many a worde I ouer skipte
In may tale for pure fere
Lest my wordes mysse set were
With sorowful hert, and woundes dede
Softe and quaking for pure drede
And shame, and stinting in my tale
For ferde and mine hewe al pale
Ful ofte I werte bothe pale and reed
Bowing to her I hinge the heed
I durst not ones loke her on
For wit, maner, and al was gone
I said: mercy, and no more
It nas no game, it sate me sore,
So at the laste, sothe to saine
Whan that myne herte was come againe
To tel shortly al my speche
With hole herte, I gan her beseche
That she wolde be my lady, swete
And swore, and hertely gan her hete
Euer to be stedfast and trewe
And loue her alway freshly newe
And neuer other lady haue
And all her worshyp for to saue
As I beste coude, I swere her this
For yours is al that euer there is
For euermore, myne hert swete
And neuer to falle you, but I mete
I nyl, as wile god helpe me so
And whan I had my tale ydo
God wote she acompted not a stre
Of al my tale, so thought me
To tel shortly, right as it is
Trewly her answere it was this
I can not nowe wel countrefete
Her wordes, but this was the grete
Of her answere, she said nay
Al vtterly, alas that day
The sorowe I suffred and the wo
That trewly Cassandra that so
Bewayled the distruction
Of Troye, and of Illyon
Had neuer soche sorowe as I tho
I durst no more say therto
For pure feare, but stale away
And thus I lyued ful many a day
That trewly I had no nede
Ferther than my beddes hede
Neuer a day to seche sorowe
I founde it redy euery morowe
For why, I loued her in no gere

So it befell an other yere
I thought ones I would fonde
To doe her knowe, and vnderfonde
My wo, and she well vnderstood
That I ne wilned thyng but good
And worship, and to kepe her name
Ouer all thynges, and drede her shame
And was so busie her to serue
And pitie were I should sterue
Sithe that I wilned none harme iwis
So when my Ladie knewe all this
My Ladie yaue me all hollie
The noble yeft of her mercie
Sauyng her worship by alwaies
Dredelesse, I mene none other waies
And therewith she yaue me a ryng
I trowe it was the first thyng
But if myne harte was iware
Glad, that it is no nede to are
As helpe me God, I was as blithe
Raised, as fro death to liue
Of all happes the alderbest
The gladdest, and the moste at rest
For truelie that swete wight
When I had wrong, and she the right
She would alwaie so goodlie
For yeue me so debonairlie
In all my youth, in all chaunce
She tooke in her gouernaunce
Therewith she was alwaie so true
Our ioye was euer iliche newe
Our hartes werne so euen a paire
That neuer nas that one contraire
To that other, for no wo
For sothe iliche thei suffred tho
O blisse, and eke o sorowe bothe
Iliche thei were bothe glad and wrothe
All was vs one, without were
And thus we liued full many a yere
So well, I can not tell how.
Sir (qᵗ I) where is she now
Now (qᵗ he) and stinte anone
Therewith he wore as dedde as stone
And saied, alas that I was bore
That was the losse, that here before
I tolde thee, that I had lorne
Bethinke thee how I saied here before
Thou woste full little what thou menest
I haue losse more then thou wenest.
God wot alas, right that was she
Alas sir how, what maie that be
She is dedde: Naie, Yes by my trouthe
Is that your losse, by God it is routhe.
And with that worde right anone
Thei gan to strake forthe, all was done
For that tyme, the harte hunting
With that me thought that this lyng
Gan homeward for to ride
Vnto a place was there beside
Whiche was from vs but a lite
A long castell with walles white
By sainct Jhon, on a riche hill
As me mette, but thus it fell.
Right thus me mette, as I you tell
That in the castell there was a bell
As it had smitte houres twelue
Therewith I awoke my selue
And found me lying in my bedde
And the booke that I had redde
Of Alcione, and Seis the kyng
And of the Goddes of slepyng
I found it in myne hond full euin
Thought I, this is so queint a sweuin
That I would by processe of tyme
Fonde, to put this sweuin in rime
As I can best, and that anon
This was my sweuin, now it is doen.

Explicit.

My matter, &c. Whē of Christ our kyng
Was asked, what is trothe or sothfastnesse
He not a worde answerde to that askyng
As who saieth, no manne is all true I gesse
And therefore, though I highte to expresse
The sorowe and woe that is in Mariage
I dare not writen of it no wickednesse
Lest I my selfe fall eft in soche dotage.

I woll not saie how that it is the chaine
Of Sathanas, on whiche he knaweth euer
But I dare saine, were he out of his paine
As by his will, he would be bounden neuer
But thilke doted foole, that eft hath leuer
I chained be, then out of prisone crepe
God let hym neuer fro his woe discreuer
Ne no man hym bewaile, though he wepe.

But yet lesse thou doe worse, take a wife
Bet is to wedde, then brenne in worse wise
But ꝑ shalt haue sorowe on thy flesche thy life
And been thy wiues thrale, as sain these wise
And if that holy writte maie not suffise
Experience shall thee teache, so maie happe
Take the waie leuer to be taken in Frise
Then eft to fall of weddyng in the trappe.

This little writte, prouerbes or figures

I sende you, take hepe of it I rede
Unwise is he, that can no wele endure
If thou be siker, put thee not in drede
The wife of Bathe, I praie you that ye rede
Of this matter, that we haue on honde
God graunt you your life frely to lede
In fredome, for foule is to be bonde.

Explicit.

The assemble of Foules.

THE life so shorte, the crafte so long to lerne
Thassaie so hard, so sharp the conquerynge
The dredefull ioy, alwaie that flit so yerne
All this meane I by loue, that my felynge
Astonieth, with his wonderfull werkynge
So sore iwis, that when I on hym thinke
Naught wete I well, whether I flete or sinke

For all be that I, knowe not loue in dede
Ne wot how that he quiteth folke her hire
Yet happeth me full ofte in bookes rede
Of his miracles, and of his cruell ire
There rede I well, he woll be lorde and sire
I dare not saie, his strokes be sore
But God saue sothe a lorde, I can no more.

Of vsage, what for lust and what for lore
On bookes rede I oft, as I you tolde
But wherfore I speake all this, naught yore
Agon, it happed me to beholde
Upon a booke, was iwritten with letters olde
And thereupon, a certain thing to lerne
The long daie, full fast I radde and yerne.

For out of the olde feldes, as men saieth
Cometh all this newe corne, fro yere to yere
And out of old bookes, in good faieth
Cometh all this newe science, that men lere
But now to purpose, as of this mattere
To rede forthe, it gan me so delite
That all that daie, me thought it but a lite.

This booke, of whiche I make mencion
Entitled was right thus, as I shall tell
Tullius, of the dreame of Scipion
Chapiters seuen it had, of heauen and hell
And yearth, and soules that therein dwell
Of whiche, as shortly as I can it treate
Of this sentence, I woll you saine the greate

First telleth it, when Scipion was come
In Affrike, how he meteth Massinisse
That hym for ioie, in armes hath inome
Then telleth he her speache, and all the blisse
That was betwixt hem, til ỹ daie gan misse
And how his auncestre Affriken sodere
Gan in his slepe that night till hym appere

Then telleth it, that from a sterrie place
How Affrikan hath hym Cartage shewed
And warned hym before, of all his grace
And saied hym what man, lered either leude
That loueth common profite, well it theude
He should into a blisfull place wende
There as the ioye is without any ende.

Then asked he, if folke that here been dede
Haue life, and dwellyng in an other place
And Affrikan saied ye, without any drede
And how our present liues space
Mẽt but a maner death, what waie we trace
And rightfull folke, shull gon after thei die
To heauen, and shewed hym the Galaxie.

Then shewed he him, the little yerth ỹ here is
To regarde of the heauens quantite
And after shewed he hym the nine speris
And after that the melodie heard he
That cometh of thilke speres thrise three
That welles of Musike been, and melodie
In this worlde here, and cause of armonie.

Then saied he him, sens yearth was so lite
And full of tourment, and of harde grace
That he ne should hym in this worlde delite
Then tolde he him, in certain yeres space
That euery sterre, should come into his place
There it was first, and all should out of mind
That in this worlde is doen, of all mankynd.

Then praied hym Scipion, to tell hym all
The waie to come into that heauen blisse
And he saied: First knowe thy self immortall
And loke aie bulely, that thou werche ỹ wisse
To common profite, and thou shalt not misse
To come swiftly, vnto that place dere
That full of blisse is, and of soules clere.

And breakers of the lawe, sothe to saine
And likerous folke, after that thei been dede
Shull whirle about ỹ world, alwaie in pain
Till many a worlde be passed, out of drede

And

And then forgeuen all her wicked dede
Then shullen thei come, to that blisfull place
To whiche to comen, God sende thee grace.

The daie gan failen, and the darke night
That reueth beastes from her businesse
Beraft me my booke for lacke of light
And to my bedde I gan me for to dresse
Fulfilled of thought, and busie heauinesse
For bothe I had thyng, whiche that I nolde
And eke I ne had that thyng that I wolde

But finally my spirite at laste
For wearie of my labour all that daie
Tooke rest, that made me to slepe faste
And in my slepe I met, as that I laie
How Affrikan, right in the self araie
That Scipion hym saw, before that tide
Was come, and stode right at my beddes side.

The wearie hunter, slepyng in his bedde
The wodde ayen his minde goeth anone
The Judge dremeth, how his plees be spedde
The Carter dremeth, how his cartes gone
The rich of gold, the knight fight w̄ his fone
The sicke mette he drinketh of the tonne
The louer mette, he hath his ladie wonne.

Can I not saine, if that the cause were
For I had radde of Affriban before
That made me to mete that he stoode there
But thus said he: thou hast thee so wel borne
In lookyng of myne old booke all to torne
Of whiche Macrobie raught not a lite
That somedele of thy labour would I quite.

Cithera, thou blisfull Ladie swete
That with thy fire brond, daūtest whē the lest
That madest me this sweuen for to mete
Be thou my helpe in this, for thou maist best
As wisely as I seigh the North Northwest
When I began my sweuen for to write
So yeue me might, to rime it and endite.

This forsaid Affriban me hent anone
And forthe with hym to a gate brought
Right of a Parke, walled with grene stone
And ouer ẏ gate, with letters large iwrought
There were verse iwritten, as me thought
On either halfe, of full greate difference
Of which I shall you saie, the plain sentence

Through me men gon into that blisful place
Of hartes heale, and dedly woundes cure
Through me men gone into the well of grace
There grene & lustie Maie, shall euer endure
This is the waie to all good auenture
Be glad thou reader, and thy sorowe of cast
All open am I, passe in and spede thee fast.

Through me mē gon, then spake thother side
Vnto the mortall strokes of the speare
Of whiche disdain and daunger is the gide
There neuer tree shall fruict, ne leaues beare
This streme you ledeth to ẏ sorowfull weare
There as the fishe in prison is all drie
The eschewyng is onely the remedie.

These verses of gold & Asure iwritten weare
Of whiche I gan, astonied to beholde
For with that one, encreased all my feare
And with that other gan my harte to bolde
That on me het, that other did me colde
No wit had I, for errour for to chese
To entre or flie, or me to saue or lese.

Right as betwene Adamantes two
Of euin weight, a pece of yron set
Ne hath no might to moue to ne fro
For what that one maie hale, that other let
So fared I, that I nist where me was bet
To entre or leaue, till Affrican me gide
We hent and shoue, at the gates wide.

And saied, it standeth writtē in thy face
Thyne errour, though thou tell it not me
But dread thee not, to come into this place
For this writyng is nothyng meante by thee
Ne by none, but he Loues seruaunt bee
For thou of Loue, hast lost thy tast I gesse
As sicke man hath, of swete and bitternesse

But natheles, although thou be dull
That thou canst not doe, yet maiest thou se
For many a man, that maie not stande a pull
Yet liketh it hym, at the wrestlyng for to be
And demeth yet, whether he doe bet, or he
And if thou haddest connyng for tendite
I shall thee shewe matter of to write.

And with that my hād in his he toke anon
Of whiche I comfort caught, and wēt in fast
But Lorde so I was glad, and well begon
For ouer all, where I myne yen cast
Were trees clad with leaues, that aie shal last
Eche in his kinde, with colour freshe & grene
As Emeraude, that ioie it was to sene.

The bilder Oke, and eke the hardie Asshe
The piller Elme, the coffer vnto caraine

The Bore pipe tree, Holme to whippes lasse
The sailing Firre, the Cipres death to plaine
The shorter Ewe, the Alpe for shaftes plaine
The Olive of peace, and eke the dronken vine
The victor Palme, the Laurer to diuine.

A gardein sawe I, full of blosomed bowis
Upon a River, in a grene Mede
There as swetenesse, euermore inough is
With floures white, blewe, yelowe, and red
And cold Welle streames, nothyng dede
That swommen full of smale fishes light
With finnes rede, and scales siluer bright.

On euery bough the birdes heard I syng
With voice of angell, in her ermonie
That bulied hem, her birdes forthe to bryng
The little pretie Conies, to her plaie gan hie
And further all about, I gan espie
The dredfull Roe, the Buck, the Hart, & Hind
Squirels, and beastes, small of gentle kind.

Of instrumentes, of stringes in accorde
Heard I so plaie, a rauisshyng swetnesse
That God, that maker is of all and Lorde
Ne heard neuer better, as I gesse
Therewith a winde, vnneth it might be lesse
Made in the leaues grene, and noise soft
Accordant to the foules song on loft.

The aire of the place, so attempre was
That neuer was ther greuaunce of hot ne cold
There was eke euery holsome spice and gras
Ne no man maie there waxe sicke ne old
Yet was there more ioie a thousande fold
Then I can tell, or euer could or might
There is euer clere daie, and neuer night.

Under a tree, beside a well I seye
Cupide our lorde, his arrowes forge and file
And at his feete, his bowe all readie laye
And well his doughter tempred all the while
The heddes in the well, with her wile
She couched hem after, as thei should serue
Some to slea, and some to wound and carue.

Tho was I ware of pleasance anon right
And of arraie, luste, beautie, and curtesie
And of the craft, that can hath the might
To doen beforse, a wight to doen folie
Disfigured was she, I will not lie
And by hymself, vnder an Oke I gesse
Sawe I delite, that stoode with gentilnesse.

Then sawe I beautie, with a nice atire
And youth, full of game and iolitee
Foolehardinesse, flatterie, and desire
Messagerie, mede, and other three
Her name shall not here be tolde for me
And vpon pillers greate of Jasper long
I sawe a temple of Brasse ifounded strong.

And about the temple, daunced alwaie
Women inow, of which some there were
Faire of himself, and some of hem were gaie
In kirtils all disheueled went thei there
That was their office euer, fro yere to yere
And on the temple, sawe I white and faire
Of Doues sittyng, many a thousande paire.

And before the temple doore full soberlie
Dame Peace sat, a curtaine in her honde
And her beside, wonder discretlie
Dame Pacience, sittyng there I fonde
With face pale, vpon an hill stonde
And alther nexte, within and without
Behest and Arte, and of her folke a rout.

Within the temple, of sighes hote as fire
I heard a swough, that gan about ren
Whiche sighes were engendred with desire
That made euery harte for to bren
Of newe flambe, and well espied I then
That all the cause of sorowes, that thei drie
Come of the bitter Goddes ialousie.

The God Priapus, sawe I as I went
Within the temple, in soueraine place stonde
In soche arraie, as when the Alle hym shent
With crie by night, and with ceptre in honde
Full busilie men gan assaie and fonde
Upon his hedde to set of sondrie hewe
Garlandes, full of freshe floures newe.

And in a priuie corner, in disport
Founde I Uenus, and her porter Richesse
That was full noble, and hauten of her port
Darke was that place, but after lightnesse
I sawe a lite, vnnethes it might be lesse
And on a bed of golde, she laie to reste
Till that the hote Sonne gan to weste.

Her gilte heeres, with a gold threde
Ibounde were, vntressed as she laie
And naked from the brest vnto the hede
Men might her se, and sothly for to saie
The remenaunt, couered well to my paie
Right with a little kerchefe of Valence
There was no thicker clothe of defence.

The place gaue a thousande sauours soote
And Bacchus God of Wine, sate her beside
And Ceres next, that doeth of humger boote
And as I saied, a middes saie Cupide
To whom on knees, the yong folkes cride
To be their helpe, but thus I let her lie
And farther in the temple, I gan espie.

That in dispite of Diane the chaste
Full many a bowe ibroke, hing on the wall
Of maidens, soche as gone her tymes waste
In her seruice, and painted ouer all
Of many a storie, of whiche I touche shall
A fewe, as of Calixte and Athalante
And many a maide, of which ỳ name I want

Semyramus, Candace, and Hercules
Biblis, Dido, Tisbe, and Piramus
Tristram, Iseude, Paris, and Achilles
Helaine, Cleopatre, and Troilus
Silla, and eke the mother of Romulus
All these were painted on that other side
And all her loue, and in what plite thei dide.

When I was comen ayen into the place
That I of spake, that was so soote and grene
For the walked I tho, my seluen to solace
Tho was I ware, where there sate a Quene
That as of light, the Sommer Sonne shene
Passeth the Sterre, right so ouer measure
She fairer was then any creature.

And in a launde, vpon an hill of floures
Was set this noble Goddesse Nature
Of braunches were her halles & her boures
Iwrought, after her craft and her measure
Neither nas foule, ỳ cometh of engendrure
That there ne were priest, in her presence
To take her dome, and yeue her audience.

For this was on sainct Valentines daie
When euery foule cometh to chese her make
Of euery kinde, that men thinke maie
And that so huge a noise gan thei make
The yearth, sea, and tree, and euery lake
So full was, that vnneth there was space
For me to stande, so full was all the place.

And right as Alaine, in the plaint of kinde
Deuiseth Nature, of soche araie and face
In soche araie, men might her there finde
This noble Empresse full of all grace
Bad euery foule take her owne place
As thei were wont alwaie, fro yere to yere
On sainct Valentines daie, standen there.

That is to saie, the foules of rauine
Were highest set, and then the foules smale
That eaten, as that Nature would encline
As worme or thing, of whiche I tell no tale
But water foule, sat lowest in the dale
And foules that liueth by sede, sat on ỳ grene
And that so many, that wonder was to sene.

There might men the roiall Egle finde
That with his sharpe looke, perseth the sun
And other Egles of a lower kinde
Of whiche that clerkes well deuisen con
There was the tirante with his fethers dun
And grene, I mean the goshauke ỳ doth pine
To birdes, for his outragious rauine.

The gentle faucon, ỳ with his fete distreineth
The kynges hand, the hardie Sperhauke eke
The Quales foe, the Merlion that peineth
Hymselfe full oft, the Larke for to seke
There was the Doue, with her iyen meke
The ielous Swan, ayenst his death ỳ singeth
The Oule eke, that of deth the bode bringeth

The Crane, the Geant, with his trõpes soune
The theik the Chough, and the chattring Pie
The scorning Jaie, the Eles foe the Heroune
The false Lapwing, full of trecherie
The Stare, that the counsaile can bewrie
The tame Ruddocke, and the cowarde Kite
The Cocke, that horiloge is of thropes lite.

The Sparow Uenus son, & the Nightingale
That clepeth forthe the freshe leaues newe
The Swalowe murdrer of the Bees smale
That maken honie, of floures freshe of hewe
The wedded Turtell, with his harte true
The Pecocke, with his angell fethers bright
The Fesaunt, scorner of the Cocke by night.

The waker Gose, the Cuckowe euer vnkinde
The Popingeie, full of delicatie
The Drake, stroier of his owne kinde
The Storke, wreker of aduoutrie
The hote Cormeraunt, full of glotonie
The Rauin & the Crowe, with her voice of care
The Throstell olde, and the Frostie feldefare.

what should I saie, of foules of euery kind
That in this worlde haue fethers and stature
Men might in that place assembled finde
Before that noble Goddes of Nature
And eche of them did his bulie cure
Benignelie to chese, or for to take
By her accorde, his formell or his make.

But

But to the poinct, Nature held on her hōd
A formall Egle, of shap the gentillest
That euer she emong her workes fonde
The moste benigne, and eke the goodliest
In her was euery vertue, at his rest
So farforthe, that nature her self had blisse
To looke on her, and oft her becke to kisse.

Nature, the vicare of the almightie Lorde
That yote, colde, heuie, light, moiste, and drie
Hath knit, by euen nomber of accorde
In ealie voice, began to speake and saie
Foules take hede of my sentence I praie
And for your own ease, ī fordrīg of your nede
As fast as I maie speake, I will me spede.

Ye know well, how on S. Valentines daie
By my statute, and through my gouernaunce
Ye doe chese your makes, and after flie awaie
With hem, as I pricke you with pleasaunce
But natheless, as by rightfull ordinaunce
Maie I not let, for all this worlde to win
But he that moste worthiest is, shall begin.

The tercell Egle, as ye knowe full wele
The foule roiall, aboue you all in degre
The wise and worthie, the secret true as stele
The whiche I haue formed, as ye maie se
In euery parte, as it best liketh me
It nedeth not his shap you to deuise
He shall first chese, and speaken in his gise.

And after hym, by order shall ye chese
After your kinde, eueriche as you liketh
And as your hap is, shall ye win or lese
But which of you, that loue moste entriketh
God sende hym her, that forest for hym siketh
And therewithall, the Tercell can she call
And saied, my sonne the choise is to thee fall.

But natheless, in this condicion
Muste be the choice, of eueriche that is here
That she agree to his eleccion
Who so he be, that should been her fere
This is our vsage alwaie, fro yere to yere
And who so maie at this time haue his grace
In blisfull tyme he came into this place.

With hed enclined, & with full hūble chere
This roiall Tercell spake, and taried nought
Unto my soueraine Ladie, and not my fere
I chose and chese, with will, hart, & thought
The formell on your hand, so well i wrought
Whose I am all, and euer will her serue
Doe what her lufte, to doe me liue or sterue.

Beseching her of mercie, and of grace
As she that is my Ladie souerain
Or let me die, here present in this place
For certes, long maie I not liue in pain
For in my harte is coruen euery vain
Hauing regarde onely to my trouthe
My dere harte, haue on my wo some routhe.

And if I be founde to her vntrue
Disobeisaunt, or wilfull negligent
Auauntour, or in proceſſe loue a newe
I praie to you this be my iudgement
That with these foules I be all to rent
That ilke daie, that she me euer finde
To her vntrue, or in my gilte vnkinde.

And sith that none loueth her so well as I
Although she neuer of loue me behet
Then ought she be mine, through her mercie
For other bonde, can I none on her knet
For well nor wo, neuer shall I let
To serue her, how farre so that she wende
Saie what you lifte, my tale is at an ende.

Right as the freshe redde Rose newe
Against the Sommer Sunne coloured is
Right so for shame, all waxen gan the hewe
Of this formell, when she heard all this
Neither she answerde well, ne saied amis
So sore abashed was she, till that Nature
Saied, doughter drede you not, I you assure.

An other Tercell Egle spake anon
Of lower kinde, and saied that should not be
I loue her better then ye doe, by sainct Jhon
Or at the least, I loue her as well as ye
And lenger haue serued her in my degree
And if she should haue loued for long louyng
To me alone had be the guerdonyng.

I dare eke saie, if she me finde false
Unkinde, iangler, or rebell in any wise
Or ielous, doe me hang by the halse.
And but I beare me in her seruise
As well as my wit can me suffise
Fro poinct to poinct, her honour for to saue
Take she my life, and all the good I haue.

The thirde Tercell Egle answerde tho
Now sirs, ye see the little leaser here
For euery foule crieth out to be ago
For the with his make, or with his Lady dere
And eke nature her self, ne will not here
For tariyng her, not half that I would sete
And but I speake, I muste for sorowe dete.

Of

Of longe seruice, auaunt I me nothing
But as possible is me to die to day
For wo, as he that hath be languishing
This twenty winter, and wel it happen may
A man may serue better, and more to pay
In halfe a yere, although it were no more
Than some man doth, ỹ hath serued ful yore

I ne say not this by me, for I ne can
Do no seruise, that may my lady please
But I dare say, I am her trewest man
As to my dome, and fainest wolde her please
At short wordes, til that dethe me cease
I wil be hers, whether I wake or winke
And trewe, in al that hert may bethinke

Of al my lyfe syth that day I was borne
So gentle plee, in loue or other thinge
Ne herde neuer no man me before
Who so that had leiser and conninge
For to reherse their chere, & their speakynge
And from the morow we gan this speche laste
Till downward went the sonne wonder faste

The noise of foules for to be deliuerde
So loude range, haue don and let vs wende
That wel wende I, ỹ wode had all to shiuerd
Come of they cried, alas, ye wil vs shende
Whan shal your cursed pleding haue an ende
Howe shulde a iudge, either partie leue
For ye or nay, without any preue

The goos, the duche, and the cuckowe also
So cried kekе kekе, cuckow, quekе quekе hye
Throughe myne eares, the noyse wente tho
The goos sayde than al this nys worthy allye
But I can shape herof a remedye
And wil say my verdite, faire and swithe
For water foule, who so be wrothe or blithe

And I for worme foule, said the fole cuckow
For I wil of min owne authorite
For cõmon spede, take on me the charge now
For to deliuer vs, it is great charite
Ye may abyde a while, yet perde
(Quod the turtel) if it be your wil
I wight may speke, it were as good be stil.

I am a sede foule, one the vnworthyest
That wote I wel, and leest of conninge
But better is, that a wightes tonge rest
Than entremete him of soche doynge
Of whiche he neither rede can nor singe
And who so it doth, ful foule hi̅ self acloyeth
For office vncommitted, ofte anoyeth

Nature, whiche that alway had an eare
To murmure of the leudenesse behinde
with facõde voice said, hold your tõges there
And I shal soone, I hope a counsaile finde
you for to deliuer, & fro this noyse vnbynde
I charge of euery flocke ye shall one cal
To say the verdite of you foules all

Assented were, to this conclusyon
The birdes al, and foules of rauine
Haue chosen first, by plaine election
The Tercelet of the faucon to define
Al her sentence, and as him lust to termine
And to Nature, him they dyd preferre
And she accepteth him with glad entente

The tercelet sayd than, in this manere
Ful harde it were, to preue it by reason
Who loueth best, this gentel formel here
For ouerliche hath soche replication
That by skilles may non be brought adoun
I cannat se, that argumentes auaile
Than semeth it there must be battaile

Al redy (quod these Engle tercelles tho
May sirs (quod he) if that I durst it say
Ye do me wronge, my tale is not ydo
For sirs, taketh nat a grefe I pray
It may not be as ye wolde, in this way
Ours is the voice, ỹ chaue ỹ charge in hande
And to the Iudges dome, ye muste stande

And therfore peace I say, as to my wit
We wolde thinke, howe that the worthiest
Of knyghthode, and lengest had vsed it
Most of estate, of blode the gentilest
Were sittinge for her, if that her lest
And of these thre, she wote her selfe I trowe
Whiche that he be, for it is light to knowe

The water fooles, haue their heedes laide
Togider, and of short auisement
Whan euerichе had his verdite saide
They said sothely, al by one assent
Howe that the goos, with the facondе gent
That so desireth, to pronounce our nede
Shal tel our tale, & prayed to god her spede

And for these water foules, tho began
The goos to speke, and in her cakelynge
She said, peace nowe, take kepe euery man
And herkē whiche a reason I shal forth bring
My witte is sharpe, I loue no tarying
I say I rede him, tho he were my brother
But she wil loue him, let him loue another

Lo here a parkite reason of a gose
(q the sperhauke) neuer mote the the
Lo soche a thing it is to haue a tonge lose
Nowe parde foole, yet were it better
Haue holde thy peace, than shewde thy nicete
It lyeth nat in his wit, nor in is wil
But sothe is saide, a foole can nat be stil

The laughter arose, of gentil foules al
And right anone, the sede foules chosen had
The Turtel trewe, and gan her to hem call
And prayed her to say, the sothe sad
Of this mater, and asked what she rad
And she answered that plainly her entent
She wolde shewe, and sothly what she ment

Nay, god forbede a louer shulde chaunge
The Turtel said, & werte for shame al reed
Though that his lady, euer more be straunge
Yet let him serue her alway, tyl he be deed
For sothe, I prayse not the goses reed
For tho she dyed, I wolde none other make
I wil be hers, tyl that the dethe me take

Wel yhourded (q the ducke) by my hat
That men shulde loue alway causeles
Who can a reason finde or wit in that
Daunceth he mery, that is mirtheles
Who shulde recke, of that is recheles
Ye queke yet (q the ducke) ful wel and faire
There be mo kerres in the skye than a paire

Nowe fye churle (q the gentel Tercelet)
Out of the dounghil, came that word aright
Thou canst not se, which thinge is wel beset
Thou farest by loue, as owles do by light
The day he blindeth, ful wel they se by nyght
Thy kinde is of so lowe wretchednesse
That what loue is, thou canst se nor gesse

Tho gā the cuckow put him for the in preace
For foule that eateth worme, and said blyue
So I (q he) may haue my make in peace
I retche nought, howe longe that ye striue
Let eche of hem be soleine al her lyue
This is my rede, sens they may nat acorde
This shorte lesson, nedeth not recorde

Ye, haue the glutton filde his paunche
Than are we wel, said the Emerlon
Thou murderer of the heisugge, on ꝑ braūche
That brought the forth, thou rufull glutton
Liue thou solein, wormes corrupcion
For no force is, of lache of thy nature
So leude be thou, while the worlde may dure

Nowe we peace (q Nature) I commaūde here
For I haue herde al your opinion
And in effecte, yet be we neuer the nere
But finally, this is my conclusion
That she her selfe, shal haue her election
Of whom her list, who so be wroth or blithe
Him ꝑ she cheseth, he shal her haue as swithe

For sithe it may not here discussed be
Who loueth her best, as said the Tercelet
Than wol I done this fauour to her, ꝑ she
Shal haue right him, on whō her hert is set
And he her, that his hert hath on her knet
This iudge I nature, for I may not lye
To none estate, I haue none other eye

But as for counsayle, for to chose a make
yf I were reason, than woulde I
Counsaile you, the royal Tercel take
As sayd the Tercelet, ful shilfully
As for the gentelest, and most worthy
which I haue wrought so wel to my plesaūce
That to you it ought ben a sufficiaunce

with dredfull voice, ꝑ formel her answerde
My rightful lady, goddesse of Nature
Soth is, that I am euer vnder your yerde
As is eueriche other creature
And must be yours, while my life may dure
And therfore graunt me my first boone
And myne entent, you wol I say right soone

I graunt it you (q she) and right anone
This formel Egle spake in this degre
Almighty quene, vnto this yere be done
I aske respite for to auysen me
And after that to haue my choyce all fre
This al and some, that I wold speke and, fey
Ye get no more, although ye do me dey

I wol not seruen Venus, ne Cupide
For sothe as yet, by no maner way
Nowe sens it may none other wayes betide
(q Nature) here is no more to say
Than wolde I that these foules were away
Eche with his make, for tariyng lenger here
And said hem thus, as ye shal after here

To you speke I, ye Tercelets (q Nature)
Bethe of good herte, and serueth al thre
A yere is not so longe to endure
And eche of you paine him in his degre
For to do wel, for god wote quit is she
For you this yere, what after so befal
This entremes, is dressed fro you all

And

And whā this werk brought was to an ende
To euery foule, Nature yaue his make
By euen acorde, and on her way they wende
And lorde the blisse and ioye that they make
For ech of hem gan other in his winges take
And with her neckes, eche gan other winde
Thankynge alway, ỳ noble goddesse of kinde

But first were chosen foules for to singe
As yere by yere, was alway her vsaunce
To singe a roundel at her departing
To do Nature honour and plesaunce
The note I trowe, maked was in fraunce
The wordes were soche, as ye may here find
The nexte vers, as I nowe haue in minde

Qui bien ayme tard oublye.

Now welcom somer, with thy sonnes soft
That hast this winter wethers ouershake
Saint Valentine, thou arte full hye on lofte
Which dryuest away, the longe nightes blake
Thus singen smale foules for thy sake
Well haue they cause for to gladen ofte
Sens eche of hem recouered hath his make
Ful blisful maie they sing whē they a wake.

And w the shouting when her songe was do
That the foules made, at her flight away
I woke, and other bokes toke me to
To rede vpon, and yet I rede alway
I hope ywis to rede so some day
That I shal mete some thinge for to fare
The bet, and thus to rede I nil not spare.

Explicit.

The Floure of

Curtesie, made by Ihon lidgate.

IN Feuerier, whan the frostye Moone
Was horned, full of Phebus firie light
And that she gan to reyse her streames sone
Sainte Valentine, vpon thy blisful night
Of dutye, whan glad is euery wight
And foules chese, to voide her olde sorowe
Euerych hys make, vpon the next morowe

The same tyme I herde a larke synge
Ful lustely, againe the morowe gray
Awake ye louers, out of your slombringe
This glad morowe, in al the haste ye may
Some obseruaunce do the vnto this day
Your choise ayen of hert to renewe
In confirming, for euer to be trewe

And ye that be of choling at your large
This lusty daye, by custome of nature
Take vpon you the blisful holy charge
To serue loue, while your lyfe may dure
With herte, body, and al your bely ture
For euermore, as Venus and Cipride
For you disposeth, and the god Cupide

For ioye owe we plainly to obey
Vnto this lordes myghty ordinaunce
And mercyfulle rather for to dey
Than euer in you be founden variaunce
And though your lyfe be medled w greuaūce
And at your herte closet be your wounde
Beth alway one, there as ye are bounde

That whan I had herde and lysted longe
With deuoute herte, the lusty melodie
Of this heuenly comfortable songe
So agreable, as by ermonye
I rose anone, and fatte gan me hye
Towarde a groue, and the way take
Foules to sene, euerich choyse his make

And yet I was ful thrustye in languishing
Wyne ague was so feruent in his hete
Whan Aurora, for dyery complayninge
Can distil her chrystal teeres wete
Vpon the soyle, with siluer dewe so swete
For she durst for shame not apere
Under the light of Phebus beames clere

And so for anguishe of my paines kene
And for constrainte of my sighes sore
I set me downe, vnder a laurer grene
Ful pitously, and alway more and more
As I beheelde in to the holtes hore
I gan complayne min inwarde deedly smert
That aye so sore crampesshe at min hert

And while that I in my dyery paine
Sate, and beheelde about on euery tre
The foules sitte alway twayne and twayne
Thā thought I thus, alas what may this be
That euery foule hath his liberte
Frely to chose, after his desire
Euerich his make, thus fro yere to yere

The fely wrenne: the tytemose also
The lytel redbrest, haue free election
To flyen ysere, and togither go
Where as hem lyste, aboute enuiron

Is they of kinde haue inclinacion
And as Nature, empryse and gide
Of euery thing lyst to prouide

But man alone, alas the harde stounde
Ful cruelly, by kindes ordinaunce
Constrained is, and by statute bounde
And debarred from al soche plesaunce
What meneth this what is this purueiaũce
Of god aboue, againe all right of kinde
Without cause, so narowe man to bynde

Thus may I sene and plaine, alas
My wofull houre, and my disauenture
That dulfully stonde in the same caas
So ferre beinde, from al helth and cure
My wounde abideth lyke a surfanure
For me fortune so felly lyste dispose
My harme is hid, that I dare not disclose

For I my herte haue set, in soche a place
Where I am neuer lykely for to spede
So frere I am hindred from her grace
That saue daunger, I haue none other mede
And thus alas, I not who shal me rede
Ne for myne helpe shape remedie
For male bouche, and for false enuye

The whiche twaine, aye stondeth in my wey
Maliciously, and false suspection
Is very cause also that I dye
Ginning and rote of my distruction
So that I fele, in conclusion
With her traines, that they wol me shende
Of my labour, that deth mote make an ende

Yet or I die, with hert, wil, and thought
To god of loue, this auowe I make
As I best can, howe dere that it be bought
Where so it be, that I slepe or wake
While Boreas doth the the leaues slake
As I haue height, plainly tyl I sterue
For wel or wo, that I shall her serue

And for her sake, nowe this holy tyme
Sainct Valentyne, somwhat shal I write
Although so be, that I can nat ryme
Nor curiously by no crafte endite
Yet leuer I haue, that she put the wite
In vnconning, than in negligence
What euer I say, of her excellence

What euer I saye, it is of dute
In sothfastenesse, and no presumpcion
This I ensure to you that, shal it se
That it is al vnder correction
What I reherse in commendacion
Of her, that I shal to you as blyue
So as I can, her vertues here discriue

Ryght by example, as the somer sonne
Passeth the sterre, with his beames shene
And Lucifer, amonge the skyes donne
Amorowe sheweth, to voide nightes tene
So verily, withouten any wene
My lady passeth, who so taketh hede
Al tho aliue, to speke of womanhede

And as the Ruby hath the souerainte
Of riche stones, and the regalie
And the rose of swetnesse and beaute
Of freshe floures, without any lye
Ryght so in sothe, with her goodly eye
She passeth al, in bounte and fairenesse
Of maner eke, and of gentelnesse

For she is bothe the fairest and the best
To reken al, in very sothfastenesse
For euery vertue is in her at reste
And furthermore, to speake of stedfastenesse
She is the rote, and of semelynesse
The very mirrour, and of gouernaunce
To al exsample, withouten variaunce

Of porte benigne, and wonder glad of chere
Hauing euermore her trewe aduertence
Alway to reason, so that her desire
Is brideled aye, by witte and prouidence
There to of witte, and of hye prudence
She is the welle, aye deuoide of pride
That vnto vertue, her selfuen is the gide

And ouer this, in her daliaunce
Lowly she is, discrete and wise
And goodly gladde, by attemperaunce
That euery wight, of high and lowe degre
Are glad in herte, with her for to be
So that shortly, if I shal not lye
She named is, the Floure of curtesie

And there to speake of feminite
The lesse mannishe in comparaison
Goodly abashed, hauing aye pite
Of hem that ben in tribulacion
For she alone is consolation
To al that arne in mischiefe and in nede
To comforte hem, of her woman hede

And aye in vertue is her busie charge
Sad and demeure, and but of wordes fewe

Dredeful

Dredful also of tonges that ben large
Eschewing aye hem, that listen to hewe
Aboue her heed, her wordes for to shewe
Dishonestly to speake of anye wight
Shе deadly hateth, of hem to haue a syght

The herte of whom, so honest is and cleane
And her entent, so faithful and entere
That she ne may, for al the worlde sustene
To suffre her eares any worde to here
Of frende nor foe, neither ferre ne nere
I mille reslowning ỳ hinder shulde his name
And yf she do, she weyeth reed for shame

So trewly in mening she is in sette
Without chaungyng, or any doublenesse
For bountie and beautie, are togither knet
In her persone, vnder faithfulnesse
For boide she is of newfangleneſſe
In herte aye one, for euer to persеuer
There she is sette, and neuer to disseuer

I am to rude, her vertues euerychone
Connyngly to discriue and write
For wel ye wote, colour haue I none
Like her discrecion, craftely to endite
For what I say, all it is to lite
Wherfore to you, thus I me excuse
That I aquainted am not with no muse

By Rhetorike, my stile to gouerne
And her preise and commendacion
I am to blynde, so hylye to discription
Of her goodnes, to make discerne
Saue thus I saye in conclusion
If that I shal shortly commende
In her is naught, that nature can amende

For good she is, lyke to Policene
And in sarenesse, to the quene Helaine
Stedfast of herte, as was Dorigene
And wekely trouth, if I shal nat faine
In constaunce eke a faithe, she maye attaine
To Cleopatre, and therto as setrone
As was of Troye, the white Antigone

As Hester meke, lyke Judith of prudence
Kynde as Alcest, or Marcia Catoun
And to Grisilde lyke in pacience
And Ariadne of discrecion
And to Lucrece, that was of Rome toun
She may be likened as for honeste
And for her faithe, vnto Penolope

To faire Phillis, and to Hipsiphilee
For innocence, and for womanhede
For semelinesse vnto Canace
And ouer this, to speake of goodlihede
She passeth al that I can of rede
For worde and dede, that she naught ne fail
Accorde in vertue, and her werkes al

For though that Dido with witte sage
Was in her tyme stedfast to Enee
Of hastinesse yet she dyd outrage
And so for Jason dyd also Medee
But my lady is so auisee
That bountie & beautie both in her demaine
She maketh bountie alway soueraine

This is to meane, bountie goth afore
Lad by prudence, and hath the soueraintе
And beaute foloweth, ruled by her lore
That she ne lende her in no degre
So that in one, this goodly freshe fre
Surmounting all, withouten any were
Is good and faire, in one persone yfere

And though that I for very ignorаunce
Ne may discriue her vertues by and by
Yet on this day for a remembraunce
Onely supported vnder her mercy
With quakinge honde, I shal ful humbly
To her hinesse, my rudenesse for to quite
A lytel balade, here beneth endite

Euer as I can suppryse in myne herte
Alway with feare, betwyxt drede and shame
Lest out of lose, any worde asterte
In this mytre, to make it seme lame
Chaucer is dede, that had soche a name
Of faire making, that without wene
Fayrest in our tonge, as the Laurer grene

We may assay for to counterfete
His gay style, but it wol not be
The welle is dryе, with the lycoure swete
Bothe of Clye, and of Caliope
And first of all, I wol excuse me
To her that is grounde of goodlihede
And thus I say, vntil her womanhede.

¶ Balade simple.

How pitie is dedde.

With al my myght, and my beſt entent
Wyth all the faithe that mighty god of kinde
Me yaue, ſith he me ſoule and knowing ſent
I cheſe, and to this bonde euer I me binde
To loue you beſt, while I haue lyfe & minde
Thus herde I foules in the dauninge
Upon the day of ſainte Valentine ſinge

yet cheſe I at the beginning, in this entēt
To loue you, though I no mercy finde
And if you lyſt I died, I wolde aſſent
As euer twinne I quicke of this kine
Sufficeth me to ſene your fethers ynde
Thus herde I foules in the morninge
Upon the day of ſainte Valentine ſinge

And ouer this, mine hertes luſte to bente
In honour onely of the wodde binde
Holy I yeue, neuer to repente
In ioye or wo, whete ſo that I winde
To ſore Cupide, with his eyen blinde
The foules al, whan Tytan did ſpringe
With deuout hert me, thought I herd ſinge.

Lenuoye.

Princeſſe of beautie, to you I repreſent
This ſimple dyte, rude as in makinge
Of hert and wil, faithfull in mine entent
Like as this day, foules herde I ſinge.

Here endeth the floure of Curteſy, and hereafter foloweth, how pyte is deed and buried in gentyle herte

Pyte that I haue I ſought ſo yore ago
With hert ſore, and full of beſy paine
That in this worlde was neuer wight ſo wo
Without deathe, and yf I ſhal nat faine
My purpoſe was, pite to complaine
Upon the crueltie and tyrannye
Of loue, that for my trouth doth me die

And that I by length of certaine yeres
Had euer in one, ſought a tyme to ſpeke
To Pite ran I, all biſpreint with teeres
To prayen her on Cruelte me a wreke
But or I might with any worde out breke
Or tel her any of my paines ſmerte
I founde her deed, and buried in an herte

Adowne I fel, whan I ſawe the herſe
Dead as a ſtone, while ỹ the ſwonne me laſte
But vp I roſe, with coloure ful diuerſe
And pitouſly on her myne eyen I caſt
And nerer the corſe I gan preaſen faſt
And for the ſoule, I hope me for to pray
I was but lorne, there was no more to ſay

Thus am I ſlayne, ſithe that Pite is deed
Alas that day that euer it ſhulde fal
What maner mā dare nowe hold vp his heed
To whom ſhal now any ſorowfull hert call
Nowe Cruelte hath caſt to ſlee vs al
In ydle hope, folke redeleſſe of paine
Sith ſhe is deed, to whom ſhal we complaine

But yet encreaſeth me this wonder newe
That no wight wote that ſhe is deed but I
So many men as in her tyme her knewe
And yet ſhe diede ſo ſodainly
For I haue ſought her euer ful beſily
Sithe I had firſte witte or mind
But ſhe was deed her I coude her finde

Aboute her herſe there ſtoden luſtely
Withouten any mo, as thought me
Bountie, perfitely wel ermed and richely
And freſhe Beaute, Luſt, and Jolite
Aſſured maner, youthe, and Honeſte
Wiſdome, Eſtate Drede, add Gouernaunce
Confedred bothe by bonde and aliaunce

A complainte had I writen in my honde
To haue put to Pyte, as a byl
But I there al this company fonde

That

That rather would all my cause spill
Then doe me helpe, I helde my plainte still
For to those folke withouten faile
Without pite, there maie no bill auaile

Then leaue all vertues, saue onely pitie
Keping the corse, as ye haue heard me saine
Confedred by bonde vnto Crueltie
And be assented when I shall be slaine
And I haue put my complainte vp againe
For to my foes, my bill I dare not shewe
The effect, which saith thus in wordes fewe

Humblest of harte, hiest of reuerence
Benigne floure, croune of vertues all
Sheweth vnto your roiall excellence
Your seruaunt, if I durst me so call
His mortall harme, in whiche he is ifall
And nought all onely for his wofull fare
But for your renome, as he shall declare

It stādeth thus that your cōtrary crueltie
Allied is ayenst your regalie
Under colour of womanly beautie
For men should not knowe her tyrannie
With Bountie, Gentillesse, and Curtesie
And hath depriued you of your place
That is hie beaute, apertenant to your grace

For kindly, by your heritage right
Ye be annexed euer vnto bountie
And verely ye ought doe your might
To helpe trouthe in his aduersitie
Ye be also the croune of beautie
And certes if ye want in these twaine
The worlde is lore, there is no more to saine

Ehe what auaileth maner and gentillesse
Without you, benigne creature
Shall crueltie be your gouernesse
Alas, what harte maie it long endure
Wherefore but ye rather take cure
To breake that perillous aliaunce
Ye sleen hem that been in your obeisaunce

And further, if ye suffer thus
Your renome is fordoe in a throwe
There shall no man wete what pitie is
Alas, that euer your renome is fall so lowe
Ye be also fro your heritake ithrowe
By crueltie, that occupieth your place
And we dispaired that seken your grace.

Haue mercie on me, thou Herenus Quene
That you haue sought, so tenderly and sore
Let some streame of light on me be sene
That loue & dreade you euer longer the more
For sothly to saine, I beare so sore
And though I be not conning for to plaine
For Goddes loue haue mercie on my paine.

My paine is this, that what so I desire
That haue I not, ne nothyng like thereto
And euer setteth desire myne harte on fire
Ehe on that other side where that I go
What maner thing that may encrease my wo
That haue I ready vnsought euery where
Me lacketh but my death, and then my bere.

What nedeth to shewe percell of my paine
Sith euery wp, that harte maie bethinke
I suffer, and yet I dare not to you plaine
For well I wote, though I wake or winke
Ye reche not whether I flete or sinke
And natheless yet my trouth I shall susteine
Unto my death, and that shall well be sene

This is to saine, I will be yours euer
Though ye me slea by crueltie your so
Algate my spirite shall neuer disceuer
Fro your seruice, for any paine or wo
Sith ye be yet dedde, alas that it is so
Thus for your death, I maie wepe and plaine
With harte sore, and full of bulie pain.

Explicit.

La belle dame

sans Mercy.

Alse in a dreame, not fully well awaked
The goldē slepe me wrapped vnder his wyng
Yet not for thy I rose, and well nigh naked
Al sodainly my self remēbryng
Of a matter, leauyng all other thyng
Whiche I must doe withouten more delaie
For hem, whiche I durst not disobaie

My charge was this, to translate by & by
All thyng forgiue as parte of my penaunce
A booke, called La bel dame sans mercy
Whiche Master Aleine made of remēbraunce
Chief secretarie with the kyng of Fraunce
And herevpon a while I stoode musyng
And in my self greatly imagenyng.

what wise I should performe the said processe
Considering by good aduisement
My vnconnyng, and my greate simpleness
And ayenward, the straite commaundement
Whiche that I had, and thus in myne entent
I was vered and tourned vp and doune
And yet at last, as in conclusioun.

I cast my clothes on, and went my waie
This forsaid charge hauing in remembraunce
Till I came to a lustie greue valaie
Full of floures, to se a greate pleasaunce
And so boldly with their benigne suffraunce
Whiche rede this boke, touchyng this matere
Thus I began, if it please you to here.

OF longe ago, ridyng an easie paas
I fell in thought of ioyful desperate
With greate disease and pain, so that I was
Of all louers the most vnfortunate
Sith by his darte, moste cruell full of hate
The death hath take my Ladie and maistresse
And left me sole, thus discomfite and mate
Sore languishyng, and in waie of distresse.

Then saied I thus, it falleth me to cesse
Either to rime, or ditees for to make
And surely to make a full promesse
To laugh no more, but wepe in clothes black
My ioyfull tyme (alas) now doeth it slake
For in my self I feele no maner of ease
Let it be written, soche fortune (as I take)
Which neither me, nor non other doth please

If it were so, my will or myne entent
Constrained were, a ioyfull thyng to write
My penne coud neuer knowe, what it ment
To speake thereof, my tongue hath no delite
Tho with my mouthe I laugh, moche or lite
Mine ỹē should make a countenance vntrue
My harte also, would haue thereof dispite
The wepyng teares, haue so large issue.

These siche louers I leue, ỹ to hem longes
Whiche lede their life in hope of alegeaunce
That is to saie, to make Balades and songes
Euery of hem, as thei feele their greuaunce
For she that was my ioye, and my pleasaunce
Whose soule I praie God, of his mercie saue
She hath my will, myne hartes ordinaunce
Whiche lieth here, within this tombe igraue

Fro this tyme forthe, tyme is to hold my pees
It werieth me, this matter for to treate
Let other louers put hem self in prees
Their season is, my tyme is now forgeate
Fortune by strength, the forcer hath vnsheate
Wherein was sperde all my worldly richesse
And all the goodes, which that I haue geate
In my best tyme of youth, and lustinesse.

Loue hath me kept vnder his gouernance
If I misdid, God graunt me forgiuenesse
If I did well, yet felt I no pleasance
It caused neither ioye nor heuinesse
For when she died, that was my maistres
My welfare, then made the same purchase
The death hath shette my bondes of witnesse
Which for nothing mine hart shal neuer pase

In this great thought, sore troubled in mind
Alone thus rode I, all the morowe tide
Till at the last it happed me to finde
The place, wherein I cast me to abide
When that I had no further for to ride
And as I went, my lodgyng to puruaie
Right sone I heard, a little me beside
In a garden, where minstrels gan to plaie.

With that anone, I went me backer more
My self and I, me thought we were inow
But twaine that wer my frendes here before
Had me espied, and yet I wote not how
Thei came for me, awaiwarde I me drowe
Somwhat by force, somwhat by her request
That in no wise, I coud my self resowe
But nedes I must come in and se the feast.

At my commyng, the Ladies euerichone
Bad me welcome, God wote right gentillie
And made me chere, euery one by one
A greate deale better then I was worthie
And of their grace, shewed me greate curtelie
W̄ good disport, bicause I should not mourne
That daie I bode still in their companie
Whiche was to me, a gracious sojourne.

The bordes were spred, in right little space
The Ladies sat, eche as he semed best
There were no dedly seruauntes in the place
But chosen men, right of the goodliest
And some there wer, perauēture most freshest
That sawe their Iudges full demure
Without semblaunt, either to molte or lest
Notwithstandyng, thei had hem vnder cure.

Emong all other, one I gan espie

Whiche

Which in great thought, ful oftē cam & went
As one that had been rauished vtterly
In his language, not greatly diligent
His countenance he kept with great turmēt
But his desire farre passed his reason
For euer his iye, went after his entent
Full many a tyme, when it was no season.

To make chere, sore hymself he pained
And outwardly he fained greate gladnesse
To sing also, by force he was constrained
For no pleasaunce, but verie shamefastnesse
For the complaint of his moste heuinesse
Came to his voice, al waie without request
Like as the soune of birdes doeth expresse
When thei sing loude, in frithe or in forest.

Other there were, that serued in the hall
But none like hym, as after myne aduise
For he was pale, and somwhat leane withall
His speache also trembled in fearfull wise
And euer alone, but when he did seruise
All blacke he ware, and no deuise but plain
Me thought by him, as my witte coud suffise
His harte was nothyng in his owne demain.

To feast hem all, he did his diligence
And well he coud, right as it semed me
But euermore, when he was in presence
His chere was doen, it nolde none other be
His Schole maister had soche aucthoritee
That all the while he bode still in the place
Speake coud he not, but vpon her beautee
He looked still, with a right pitous face.

With that his hedde he tourned at the last
For to beholde the Ladies euerichone
But euer in one, he set his iye stedfast
On her, whiche his thought was moste vpon
For of his iyen, the shot I knewe anone
Which fearfull was, w̄ right hūble requestes
Then to my self I saied, by God alone
Soche one was I, or that I sawe these iestes.

Out of the prease he went full easely
To make stable his heauie countenance
And wote ye well, he sighed wonderly
For his sorowes and wofull remembrance
Then in hymself, he made his ordinance
And forthwithall came to bryng in the messe
But for to iudge, his moste wofull penance
God wote it was a pitous entremesse.

After diner anone, thei hem auanced
To daunce aboue the folke euerychone
And forthwithal, this heauie mā he daunced
Somtime with twaine, & somtime with one
Unto hem all, his chere was after one
Now here now there, as fell by auenture
But euer emong, he drewe to her alone
Whiche he moste dreade, of liuyng creature

To mine aduise, good was his purueiance
When he her chose, to his maistresse alone
If that her harte were set to his pleasance
As moche as was her beauteous persone
For who so euer setteth his trust vpon
The report of the iyen, withouten more
He might be dedde, and grauen vnder stonē
Or euer he should, his hartes ease restore.

In her failed nothyng, that I coud gesse
One wise nor other, priuie nor perte
A garison she was, of all goodlinesse
To make a frounter, for a louers herte
Right yong and freshe, a woman full couertē
Assured wele of porte, and eke of chere
Wele at her ease, withouten wo or smerte
All vnderneath the standerde of dangere.

To se the feast, it weried me full sore
For heauie ioye doeth sore the harte trauaile
Out of the prease, I me withdrawe therfore
And set me doune alone behinde a traile
Full of leaues, to se a greate meruaile
With grene wrethes ibounden wonderly
The leaues were so thicke withouten faile
That throughout, no man might me espie.

To this Ladie he came full curtesly
Whē he thought time to daunce w̄ her a trace
Set in an herber, made full pleasantly
Thei rested hem fro thens but a little space
Nigh hem were none, of a certain compace
But onely thei, as farre as I coud se
Saue the traile, there I had chose my place
There was no more bitwen hem two and me

I heard the louer sighyng wonder sore
For aye the more, the sorer it hym sought
His inward pain he coud not kepe in store
Nor for to speake, so hardie was he nought
His leche was nere, ẏ greater was his thouzt
He mused sore, to conquere his desire
For no mā maie to more penañce be brought
Then in his heate, to bryng hym to the fire.

The harte began to swell within his chest
So sore strained, for anguishe and for pain
That all to peces almoste it to brest

When

When bothe at ones, so sore it did constrain
Desire was bolde, but shame it gan refrain
That one was large, the other was full close
No little charge was laied on hym certain
To kepe soche werre, and haue so many sose.

Full oftē times to speak, himself he pained
But shamefastnesse and drede, saied euer naie
Yet at the last, so sore he was constrained
When he full long had put it in delaie
To this Ladie, right thus then gan he saie
With dredefull voice, wepyng, halfe in a rage
For me was purueied, an vnhappie daie
When I first had a sight of your visage

I suffre pain God wote, full hote brenning
To cause my death, all for my true seruise
And I se well, ye recke thereof nothing
Nor take no hede of it, in no kinde wise
But when I speake after my best aduise
Ye set it at nought, but make thereof a game
And though I sewe, so greate an enterprise
Yet peireth not your worship nor your fame.

Alas, what should it be to you preiudice
If that a man doe loue you faithfully
To your worship, eschewyng euery vice
So am I yours, and will be verely
I chalenge nought of right, and reason why
For I am hole submit vnto your seruice
Right as you list it be, right so will I
To binde my self, where I was in fraunchise

L'amant.

Though it be so, that I can not deserue
To haue your grace, but alwaie liue in drede
Yet suffre me, you for to loue and serue
Withouten maugre of your moste goodlihede
Both faith & trouth I giue your womanhede
And my seruice without any callyng
Loue hath me bound, without wage or mede
To be your man, and leue all other thyng

La dame.

When this ladie had heard al this lāguage
She gaue answere, full oft and demurely
Without chaungyng of colour or courage
Nothyng in hast, but mesurably
Me thinketh sir, your thought is great foly
Purpose ye nought, your labour for to cease
For thinketh not, whiles ye liue and I
In this matter, to set your harte in pease.

L'amant.

Ther maie none make the peace, but onely ye
Which are the ground & cause of all this war
For with your iyen, the letters written be
By whiche I am defied and put a farre
Your pleasaunt looke, my very lode starre
Was made heraude, of thilke same defiaunce
Whiche vtterly behight me for to barre
My faithfull trust, and all myne affiaunce.

La dame.

To liue in wo, he hath greate fantasie
And of his harte also slipper holde
That onely for beholdyng of an ye
Can not abide in peace, as reason wolde
Other or me, if ye list ye maie beholde
Our iyē ar made to loke, why should we spare
I take no kepe, neither of yong ne olde
Who feleth smart, I counsaile hym beware.

L'amant.

If it be so, one hurte an other sore
In his defaute, that feleth the greuaunce
Of very right, a man maie doe no more
Yet reason would it were in remembraunce
And sith fortune onely by her chaunce
Hath caused me to suffre all this pain
By your beautie, with all the circumstaunce
Why list ye haue me, in so greate disdain.

La dame.

To your persone, ne haue I no disdain
Nor neuer had truelie, ne nought will haue
Nor right greate loue, nor hatred in certain
Nor your counsaile to knowe, so God me saue
If soche loue be in your minde igraue
That little thyng, maie doe you displesaunce
You to begile, or make you for to raue
I will not cause, no soche encombraunce.

L'amant.

What euer it be, ỹ me hath thus purchased
Wenyng hath not deceiued me certain
But feruent loue, so sore hath me ichased
That I vnware, am casten in your chaine
And sith so is, as fortune list ordaine
All my welfare, is in your handes fall
In eschewyng of more mischeuous paine,
Who soneste dieth, his care is leaste of all.

La dame.

This sickenesse is right easie to endure
But fewe people, it causeth for to die
But what thei meane, I knowe it very sure
Of more comfort, to drawe the remedie
Soche be there now, plainyng full pitouslie

That

That fele God wote, not alther greatest pain
And if so be, loue hurte so greuousslie
Lesse harme it wer, one sorowful then twain

L'amant.

Alas Madame, if that it might you please
Moche better it were, by waie of gentilnesse
Of one sorie, to make twain well at ease
Then hym to destroie that liueth in distresse
For my desire is, neither more nor lesse
But my seruice, to doe for your pleasaunce
In eschewyng all maner doublenesse
To make two ioies, in stede of one greuaunce

La dame.

Of loue I seke, neither pleasaunce nor ease
Nor haue therein no greate affiaunce
Though ye be sick it doeth me nothing please
Also I take no hede of your pleasaunce
Chese who so will, her hartes to auaunce
Free am I now, and free will I endure
To be ruled by mannes gouernaunce
For yearthly good, Naie, that I you ensure.

L'amant.

Loue, which that ioy & sorow doeth depart
Hath set the Ladies out of all seruage
And largely doeth graunt hem for her part
Lordship and rule of euery maner of age
The poor seruant, nought hath of auantage
But what he maie get onely by purchesse
And he that ones, to loue doeth his homage
Full often tymes, dere bought is the richesse.

La dame.

Ladies be not so simple, thus I meane
So dull of witte, so sotted in folie
That for wordes, which said be of the splene
In faire language, painted full pleasauntlie
Whiche ye and mo, holde scholes of dailie
To make hem all, greate wonders to suppose
But sone thei can awaie, their heddes wrie
And to faire speache, lightly their eares close

L'amant.

There is no man, that iangleth busilie
And setteth his harte, & al his minde therfore
That by reason, maie plain so pitousslie
As he that hath moche heauinesse in store
Whose hedde is hole, and saieth that it is sore
His fained chere, is harde to kepe in mewe
But thought, whiche is vnfained euermore
The wordes preueth, as the wordes shewe.

La dame.

Loue is subtill, and hath a greate awaite
Sharp in working, in gabbing great plesãce
And can hym venge, of soche as by disceite
Would feele & knowe, his secrete gouernance
And maketh hem to obeie his ordinance
By cherefull waies, as in hem is supposed
But when thei fall into repentance
Then in a rage, her counsaile is disclosed.

L'amant.

Sith for as moche, as God and eke natiste
Hath auaunced loue, to so hie degree
Moche sharpe is the poinct, thus am I sure
Yet greueth more the faute, where euer it bee
Who hath no colde, of heate hath no deintee
The one for that other, asked is expresse
And of pleasaunce, knoweth none certaintee
But it be one, in thought and heauinesse.

La dame.

As for pleasaunce, it is not alwaie one
That you think swete, I think it bitter pain
Ye maie not me constrain, nor yet right none
After your luste to loue, that is but vain
To chalenge loue by right, was neuer sein
But harte assent, before bonde and promise
For strength and force, maie not attain
A will that standeth enfeffed in franchise.

L'amant.

Right faire ladie, god mote I neuer please
If I seeke other right in this case
But for to shewe you plainly my disease
And your mercie to abide, and eke your grace
If I purpose your honour to deface
Or euer did, God and fortune me shende
And that I neuer vnrightfully purchace
One onelie ioye, vnto my liues ende.

La dame.

Ye and other, that sweare soche othes faste
And so condempne, and cursen to and fro
Full sikerly ye wene your othes laste
No lenger then the wordes been ago
And God, and eke his sainctes laugh also
In soche swearyng, there is no stedfastnesse
And these wretches that haue ful trust therto
After thei wepe and wailen in distresse.

L'amant.

He hath no courage of a man truelie
That secheth pleasaunce, worship to dispise
Nor to be called forthe, is not worthie
The yearth to touch, the aire in no kins wise
A trustie harte, a mouthe without feintise
Thus by the strength of euery maner name

And

And who that laieth his faithe for little prise
He leseth bothe his worship and his fame.

La dame.

A cursed harte, a mouthe that is curteise
Full well ye wote thei be not accordyng
Yet fained chere, right fone maie hem apeise
Where of malice is set all her worckyng
Full false semblāt thei bere, and true semyng
Her name, her fame, her tongues but fained
Worship in hem is put in forgettyng
Nought repented, nor in no wise complained

L'amant.

Who thinketh ill, no good maie him befall
God of his grace graunt eche man his desart
But for his loue, emong your thoughtes all
As thinke vpon my wofull sorowes smart
For of my paine, whether your tender hart
Of swete pitie, be not therewith agreued
And of your grace, to me were discouart
That by your mean, sone should I be releued

La dame.

A lightsome harte, a follie of pleasaunce
Are moche better, the lesse while thei abide
Thei make you think, & bring you in a traūce
But that sickenesse will sone be remedide
Respite your thought, and put all this aside
Full good disporte merieth me all daie
To helpe nor hurte, my will is not aplide
Who troweth me not, I let hym passe awaie.

L'amant.

Who hath a birde, a faucon, or a hounde
That foloweth hym for loue in euer place
He cherisheth him, and kepeth him ful sound
Out of his sight, he will not hym enchace
And I that set my wittes in this case
On you alone, withouten any chaunge
Am put vnder, moche farther out of grace
And lesse set by, then other that be straunge.

La dame.

Though I make chere to euery man about
For my worship, & for myne owne fraunchise
To you I nill doe so, withouten doubt
In eschewyng all maner preiudise
For wote ye well, loue is so little wise
And in bileue, so lightly will be brought
That he taketh all at his owne deuise
Of thing God wote, ỹ serueth him of nought

L'amant.

If I by loue, and by my true seruise
Lese the good chere ỹ straungers haue alwaie
Whereof shall serue my trouthe in any wise
Lesse then to him, that cometh & goeth aldaie
Whiche holdeth of you nothyng, ỹ is no naie
Also in you is lost, as to my semyng
All curtesie, whiche of reason will saie
That loue for loue, were lawfull desiryng.

La dame.

Curtesie is alied wonder nere
To worship, whiche hym loueth tenderly
And he will not be bounde for no praiere
Nor for no giftes, I saie you berely
But this good chere, depart full largely
Where hym liketh, as his conceipt will fall
Guerdon constrained a gift doen thankfully
These twain can neuer accord nor neuer shal

L'amant.

As for guerdon I seke none in this cace
For that deserte, to me it is to hie
Wherfore I aske your pardon and your grace
Sith me behoueth death, or your mercie
To giue the good where it wanteth truly
That were reason, and a curtise manere
And to your owne moche better were worthy
Then to straungers, to shewe hem louely chere

La dame.

What cal ye good, fain would I that I wist
That pleaseth one, an other smerteth sore
But of his owne, to large is he that list
Giue moche, and lese his good name therfore
One should not make a graunt, little ne more
But the request were right well accordyng
If worship be not kept and set before
All that is lefte, is but a little thyng.

L'amant.

Into this worlde was founden neuer none
Nor vnder heauen creature ibore
Nor neuer shall, saue onely your persone
To whō your worship toucheth halfe so sore
But me whiche haue no season lesse ne more
Of youth ne age, but still in your seruice
I haue no iyen, no wit, nor mouthe in store
But all be giuen to the same office.

La dame.

A ful greate charge hath he withoutē faile
That his worship kepeth in sikernesse
But in daunger he setteth his trauaile
That setteth it with others businesse
To hym that longeth honour and noblesse

Upon

Upon none other should not be awaite
For of his owne, so moche hath he the lesse
That of other, moche folowethe the conceite.

L'amant.

Your tyē hath set the print, which that I fele
Within my harte, that where so euer I go
If I doe thyng, that souneth vnto wele
Nedes must it cum from you, and fro no more
Fortune will this, that I for wele or wo
My life endure, your mercie abidyng
And verie right will, that I thinke also
Of your worship, aboue all other thyng.

La dame.

To your worship see well, for that is neede
That ye spende not your season all in vain
As touchyng myne, I rede you take no heede
By your follie, to put your self in pain
To ouercome is good, and to restrain
In harte, whiche is deceiued follilie
For worse it is to breake then bowe certain
Better bowe, then to fall sodainly.

L'amant.

Now faire Ladie thinke, sith it first began
That loue hath set mine harte vnder his cure
If neuer might, ne truelie I ne can
None other serue, while I shall here endure
In moste free wise, thereof I make you sure
Which maie not be withdraw, this is no naie
I must abide all maner aduenture
For I maie neither put to nor take awaie.

La dame.

I holde it for no gift in sothfastnesse
That one offreth, where it is forsake
For suche a gifte is abandonyng erpresse
That with worship ayen maie not be take
He hath an harte full fell that list to make
A gift lightlie, that put is to refuse
But he is wise, that suche conceipt will slake
So that hym nede, neither to studie ne muse.

L'amant.

He should not muse, ỹ hath his seruice spent
On her, whiche is a Ladie honourable
And if I spende my tyme to that entent
yet at the least, I am not reprouable
Of fained harte, to thinke I am vnable
Or I mistooke, when I made this requeste
By whiche loue hath of enterprise notable
So many hartes gotten by conqueste.

La dame.

If that ye liste doe after my counsaile
Seche a fairer, and of more higher fame
Whiche in seruice of loue, will you preuaile
After your thought, accordyng to the same
He hurteth bothe his worship and his name
That follily, for twain himself will trouble
And he also leseth his after game
That surely can not set his poinctes double.

L'amant.

This your counsaile, by ought that I can see
Is better saied then doen, to myne aduise
Though I beleue it not, forgiue it me
Mine harte is soche, so hole without feintise
That I ne maie giue credence in no wise
To thyng, whiche is not sounyng vnto truth
Other counsaile I see, be but fantasise
Saue of your grace, to shewe pitie and ruth.

La dame.

I holde hym wise that woorketh no folie
And when hym list, can leue and part therfro
But in connyng, he is to learne truelie
That would himself conduite, and can not so
And he that will not after counsaile doe
His sute he putteth into disperaunce
And all the good that should fall hym toe
Is lost and dedde, clene out of remembraunce

L'amant.

Yet woll I shewe this matter faithfullie
Whiles I liue, what euer be my chaunce
And if it hap, that in my truthe I die
Then death shall doe me no displeasaunce
But when that I, by your harde suffraunce
Shall die so true, and with so greate a pain
yet shall it doe me moche the lesse greuaunce
Then for to liue a false louer certain.

La dame.

Of me get ye right noght, this is no fable
I will to you be neither hard nor straite
And right will, not no man customable
To thinke ye should, be sure of my conceite
Who seeketh sorowe, his be the receite
Other counsaile can I not feele nor see
Nor for to learne, I call me not to awaite
Who will thereof, let hym assaie for me

L'amant.

Ones must it be assaied, that is no naie
With soche as be of reputacion
And of true loue, the the right honour to paie

Of free hartes gotten by due raunsome
For frewill holdeth this opinion
That it is greate duresse and discomforte
To kepe a harte in so straite a prison
That hath but one bodie for his disporte.

La dame.

I knowe so many causes marueilous
That I must nede of reason thinke certain
That soche auenture is wonder perilous
And yet well more, the coming backe again
Good or worship, thereof is seldome sene
Where I ne will make soche araie
As for to finde a pleasaunce, but a baraine
When it shall cost so dere the first assaie.

L'amant.

Ye haue no cause to doubt of this matter
Nor you to meue with no soche fantasie
To put me farre all out as a straunger
For your goodnesse cā thinke and well aduise
That I haue made aprise in eury wise
By whiche my truthe sheweth open euidence
My long abidyng, and my true seruice
Maie well be knowen by plain experience.

La dame.

Of verie right he maie be called true
And so must he be take in euery place
That can discerne, and let as he ne knewe
And kepe the good, if he it maie purchase
For who that praieth, or sweareth in any case
Right well ye wote, in ẏ no trouth is preued
Soch hath there been, & ar, that getten grace
And lese it sone, when thei haue it acheued.

L'amant.

If truthe me cause, by vertue souerain
To shewe good loue, and alwaie find cōtrarie
And eherishe ẏ, whiche sleeth me with ẏ pain
This is to me a louely aduersarie
When ẏ pitie, whiche long on slepe doth tarie
Hath set the fine of all my heuinesse
Yet her comfort to me moste necessarie
Shall set my will more sure in stablenesse.

La dame.

The woful wight, what maie he think or say
The contrarie of all ioye and gladnesse
A licke bodie, his thought is alwaie
From hem that felen no sore nor sickenesse
Thus hurtes been of diuers businesse
Whiche loue hath put to greate hinderaunce
And truthe also, put in forgetfulnesse
When thei full sore begin to sigh alhaunce.

L'amant.

Now God defende, but he be harmelesse
Of all worship or good that maie befall
That to werst tourneth by his leudnesse
A gift of grace, or any thyng at all
That his Ladie vouchsafe vpon hym call
Or cherisheth hym in honourable wise
In that defaute, what euer he be that fall
Deserueth more then death to suffre twise

La dame.

There is no iudge islet an soche trespace
By whiche of right, loue maie recouered be
One curseth fast, an other doeth manace
Yet dieth none, as farre as I can see
But kepe her course alwaie in one degree
And euer more, their labour doeth encrease
To bring Ladies by their greate subteltee
For others gilte, in sorowe and disease.

L'amant.

All be it so, one doeth so greate offence
An dis not dedde, nor put to no iustice
Right well I wote hym gaineth no defence
But he must ende in full mischeuous wise
And all euer saied, God will hym dispise
For falshed is full of cursednesse
That his worship may neuer haue enterprise
Where it reigneth, and hath the wilfulnesse.

La dame.

Of that haue thei no greate fere now a daise
Soche as will saie and maintain it thereto
That stedfast truthe is nothyng for to praise
In hem that kepe it long in wele or wo
Their bulie hartes passen to and fro
Thei be so well reclaimed to the lure
So well learned hem to with holde also
And al to chaūge, whē loue should best endure

L'amant.

When one hath set his harte in stable wise
In soche a place, as is bothe good and true
He should not flit, but doe forthe his seruice
Alwaie withouten chaunge of any newe
As sone as loue beginneth to renewe
All pleasaunce goeth anone in little space
As for my partie that shall I eschue
While the soule abideth in his place.

L'amant.

To loue truely, there as it ought of right
Ye maie not be mistaken doubtlesse
But ye be soule disceiued in your sight

By light vnderstandyng, as I gesse
Yet maie we well repele your businesse
And to reason haue some attendaunce
Woche better thā to abide by folie simplenes
The feble seccour of disperaunce.

L'amant.

Reasō, counsaile, wisedome, and good aduise
Been vnder loue arested euerichone
To whiche I can accorde in euery wise
For thei been not rebell, but still as a stone
Their will and myne, be medled all in one
And therwith boundē with so strong a chain
That as in hem, departyng shall be none
But pitie breake the mightie bonde atwain.

La dame.

Ye loue not your self, what euer ye bee
That in loue stande forgette in euery place
And of your wo, if ye haue no pitee
Others pitee bileue ye not to purchace
But be fullie assured, as in this cace
I am alwaie vnder one ordinaunce
To haue better trust not after grace
And all that leueth, take to your pleasaunce

L'amant.

I haue my hope so sure and so stedfast
That soche a Ladie should not lacke pitie
But now alas, it is shit vp so fast
That daunger sheweth on me his crueltie
And if she se the vertue faile in me
Of true seruice, though she doe faile also
No wonder were, but this is my surete
I must suffre, whiche waie that euer it go.

La dame.

Leaue this purpose I rede you for the best
For the lenger ye kepe, it is in vain
The lesse ye get, as of your hartes rest
And to reioyce it shall you neuer attain
When ye abide good hope to make you fain
Ye shall be founde aslotted in dotage
And in the ende, ye shall knowe for certain
Hope shall paie the wretches for her wage.

L'amant.

Ye saie as falleth most for your pleasaunce
And your power is greate, all this I see
But hope shall neuer out of my remēbraunce
By whiche I fele so greate aduersitee
For when nature hath set in you plentie
Of all goodnesse, by vertue and by grace
Ye neuer assembled hem, as semed me
To put pitie out of his dwellyng place.

La dame.

Pitie of right ought to be reasonable
And to no wight do no greate disauauntage
There as is nede, it should be profitable
And to the pitous shewyng no domage
If a Ladie will doe so greate outrage
To shewe pitie and cause her owne debate
Of soche pitie cometh dispitous rage
And of soche loue, also right dedly hate.

L'amant.

To comfort hem that liue all comfortlesse
That is no harme, but comfort to your name
But ye that haue a harte of soche duresse
And a faire Ladie I must affirme the same
If I durst saie, ye winne all this defame
By crueltie, whiche sitteth you full ill
But if pitie, whiche maie all this attain
In your high harte maie rest and tary still.

La dame.

What euer he be that saieth he loueth me
And parauenture I leue well it be so
Ought he be wrothe, or should I blamed be
Though I did not as he would haue me doe
If I medled with soche or other moe
It might be called pitie merciless
And afterward if I should liue in wo
Then to repent, it were to late I gesse.

L'amant.

O marble harte, and yet more harde parde
Whiche mercie maie not perce for no labour
More strong to bowe then is a mightie tree
What auaileth you to shewe so greate rigour
Pleaseth it you more to se me die this hour
Before your yen, for your disport and plaie
Then for to shewe some comfort and seccour
To respite death, whiche chaseth me alwaie.

La dame.

Of your disease, ye maie haue allegeaunce
And as for myne, I let it ouer slake
Also ye shall not die for my pleasaunce
Nor for your heale, I can no suretie make
I will not hurte my self for others sake
Wepe thei, laugh thei, or sing thei, I waraunt
For this matter, so will I vndertake
That none of hem shall make therof auaunt.

L'amant.

I can not skill of loue by God alone
I haue more cause to wepe in your presence
And well ye wote, auauntour am I none
For certainly, I loue better silence
One should not loue by his hartes credence

But he were sure to kepe it secretlie
For a vaunitour is ofno reuerence
When that his tongue is his moste enemie.

La dame.

Male bouch in court, hath great cõmaũdmẽt
Ech man studieth to saie the worst he maie
Thele false louers, in this tyme now present
Thei serue best to iangle as a Jaie
The moste secrete i wis, yet some men saie
How he mistrusted is in some partise
Wherfore to ladies whẽ so men speake or saie
It should be bileued in no wise.

L'amant.

Of good and ill shall be, and is alwaie
The world is soche, the yearth is not al plain
Thei that be good, ỹ profe sheweth euery daie
And other wise greate billonie certain
It is reason, though one his tongue disdain
With cursed speache, to doe hymselfe a shame
That soche refuce, should wrõgfully remain
Upon the good renomed in their fame.

La dame.

Soch as be nought, whẽ thei here tidigs new
That eche trespas shall lightly haue pardon
Thei that pursuen to be good and true
Will not set by none ill disposicion
To continue in euery good condicion
Thei are the first that fallen in domage
And full frely the hartes habandon
To little faithe, with soft and faire language

L'amant.

Now knowe I well of verie certaintee
If one doe truelie, yet shall he be shente
Sith all maner of iustice and pitee
Is banished out of a Ladies entente
I can not see, but all is at one stente
The good, the ill, the vice, and eke the vertue
Soche as be good, soche haue the punishmẽte
For the trespace of hem that liue vntrue.

La dame.

I haue no power you to doe greuaunce
Nor to punishe none other creature
But to eschewe the more encombraunce
To kepe vs from you all, I holde it sure
False semblaunce, hath a face full demure
Lightlie to catche these Ladies in a waite
Wherefore we must, if we will here endure
Make right good watch, lo this is my cõceite

L'amant.

Sith that of grace, a goodly worde not one
Maie now be had, but alwaie kept in store
I appeale to God, for he maie beare my mone
Of the duresse, whiche greueth me so sore
And of pitee, I complaine furthermore
Whiche he forgate, in all his ordinaunce
Or els my life to haue ended before
Whiche so sone am put out of remembraunce

La dame.

My harte nor I, haue doen you no forfeite
By whiche ye should complaine in any kinde
Nothyng hurteth you, but your own cõceite
Be iudge your self, for so ye shall it finde
Thus alwaie let this sinke in your minde
That your desire shall neuer recouered be
Ye noye me sore, in wasting all this winde
For I haue saied inough, as semeth me.

L'amant.

This wofull man rose vp in all his paine
And so departed with wepyng countenaunce
His wofull harte, almoste to brast in twaine
Full like to die, walkyng forthe in a traunce
And saied death come forthe, thy self auaunce
Or that myne harte forget his propertie
And make shorter all this wofull penaunce
Of my poore life, full of aduersitie.

Fro thens he wẽt, but whither wist I nought
Nor to what part he drewe in sothfastnesse
But he no more was in his ladies thought
For to the daunce anone she gan her dresse
And afterward, one tolde me thus expresse
He rent his heer, for anguishe and for pain
And in hymself toke so greate heauinesse
That he was dedde within a daie or twain.

Lenuoy.

THE true louers thus I beseche you all
Soche aduentures flie hẽ in euery wise
And as people defamed ye hem call
For thei truelie dooe you greate prejudice
His castelles strong stuffed with ordinaunce
For thei haue had long tyme by their office
The whole countrey of loue in obeisaunce.

And ye Ladies, or what estate ye be (place
Of whom worship hath choise his dwellyng
For

For Goddes loue doe no soche crueltie
Nor in nowise ne foule not the trace
Of her that here is named rightwisely
Whiche by reason me semeth in this cace
Maie be called, La belle dame sans mercy.

Go litile boke, God sende thee good passage
Chese well thy waie, be simple of manere
Looke thy clothyng be like thy pilgremage
And specially let this be thy praiere
Unto hem all, that thei will rede or here
Where thou art wrong after her helpe to call
Thee to correcte in any parte or all.

Praie hem also with thine humble seruice
Thy boldnesse to pardon in this cace
For els thou art not able in no wise
To make thy self appere in any place
And furthermore beseche hem of her grace
By her fauour and supportacion
To take in gree this rude translacion.

The which God wote stādeth full destitute
Of eloquence, of metre, and colours
Like as a beast naked without refute
Upon a plain to abide all maner showers
I can no more, but aske of hem socours
At whose request thou wer made in this wise
Commaundyng me with body and seruice.

Right thus I make an ende of this prosses
Besechyng hym, that all hath in balaunce
That no true man be vexed causelesse
As this man was, whiche is of remēbraunce
And all that doen her faithfull obseruaunce
And in her trouth porpose hym to endure
I praie God sende hem better auenture.

Explicit.

¶ Of Quene Annelida, and false Arcite.

O Thou fiers God of armes Mars the rede
That in thy Frostie countrey called Trace
Within thy grisly temples full of drede
Honoured art as patrone of that place
With the Bellona Pallas full of grace
Be present, and my song continue and gie
At my beginnyng thus to thee I crie.

For it full depe is sonken in mynde
With pitous harte in Englishe to endite
This olde storie, in Latine whiche I finde
Of Quene Annelida and false Arcite
That elde, whiche all can frete and bite
And it hath freten many a noble storie
Hath nigh deuoured out of our memorie.

Be fauourable eke thou Polimnia
On Pernaso that hath thy sisters glade
By Elicon, not farre from Cirsa
Singest with voice memoriall in the shade
Under the Laurer, which that maie not fade
And doe that I my ship to hauen winne
First followe I Stace, and after him Corinne

Iamq́ domos patrias Cithie post aspera gētis. Prelea laurigero suburente Thesea curru Letifice plausus missusq́ ad sidera vulgi.

When Theseus with warres long and great
The aspre folke of Cithe hath ouercome
The Laurer crouned in his chaire gold beate
Home to his countre houses is icome
For whiche the people blisfull all and some
So criden, that to the Sterres it went
And hym to honouren did all her entent.

Before this Duke, in signe of victorie
The Trompes come, and in his baner large
The Image of Mars, and in token of glorie
Men might see of treasure many a charge
Many a bright helme, & many a spere & targe
Many a freshe knight, & many a blisfull rout
On horse and on foote, in all the field about.

Ipolita his wife, the hardie Quene

Of Cithia, that he conquered had
With Emelie her young suster shene
Faire in a chare of golde he with hym lad
That al the ground about her chare she spread
With brightnesse of beautie in her face
Fulfilled of largesse and of grace

With his triumph & laurer corouned thus
In all the floure of Fortunes yeuyng
Lete I this noble prince Theseus
Toward Athenes in his waie ridyng
And fonde I woll in shortly to bring
The sle waie of that I gan to write
Of quene Annelida and false Arcite

Mars that through his furious course of ire
The olde wrathe of Juno to fulfill
Hath set the peoples hartes bothe on fire
Of Thebes and Grece, & euerich other to hill
With bloodie speres rested neuer still
But thrōg now here now there emōg hē both
That euerich other slue, so were thei wroth.

For when Amphiorax and Tideus
Ipomedon, and Partinope also
Were dedde, and slain proude Campaneus
And whē the wretched Thebans brethrē two
Were slain, and kyng Adrastus home ago
So desolate stoode Thebes and so bare
That no wight could remedie of his care.

And when the old Creon gan espie
How that ỳ blood roiall was brought adoun
He held the citee by his tyrannie
And did the gentils of that regioun
To been his friendes, and dwell in the toun
So what for loue of hem, and what for awe
The noble folke were to the toune idrawe.

Emong all these Annelida the quene
Of Ermonie, was in that tounedwellyng
That fairer was then the Sonne shene
Throughout ỳ worlde so gā her name spryng
That her to see had euery wight likyng
For as of trouthe is there none her liche
Of all the women in this worlde riche.

Yong was this quene, of twentie yere olde
Of middle stature, and of soche fairenesse
That nature had a ioye her to beholde
And for to speaken of her stedfastnesse
She passed hath Penelope, and Lucresse
And shortlie if she shall been comprehended
In her might nothyng been amended.

This Theban knight ehe sothe to sain
Was yong, and therto withal a lustie knight
But he was double in loue, & nothing plain
And subtill in that crafte ouer any wight
And with his conning wan this ladie bright
For so ferforthe he gan her trouth assure
That she hym trusteth ouer any creature.

What should I sain, she loueth Arcite so
That when that he was absent any throwe
Anone her thought her harte brast a twoo
For in her sight to her he bare hym lowe
So that she wende haue all his harte iknowe
But he was false, it nas but fained chere
As nedeth not soche craft men to lere

But neuertheless full mikell businesse
Had he, er that he might his Ladie winne
And swore he would dien for distresse
Or from his witte he saied he would twinne
Alas the while, for it was routhe and sinne
That she vpon his sorowes would rue
But nothing thinketh ỳ false as doth ỳ true.

Her fredome found Arcite in soche manere
That all was his, that she hath moche or lite
Ne to no creature made she chere
Further then it liked to Arcite
Therwas no lack, w̄ which he might her wite
She was so ferforthe yeuen hym to please
That all that liked hym, did her ease.

There nas to her no maner letter sent
That touched loue, from any maner wight
That she ne shewed hym or it was brent
So plain she was, and did her full might
That she nill hide nothyng from her knight
Lest he of any untrouthe her upbreide
Without bode his harte she obeide.

And eke he made hym talous ouer her
That what that any man had to her saied
Anon he would praien her to swere
What was ỳ worde, or make him iuell apaied
Then wende she out of her witte haue braied
But all was but sleight and flatterie
Without loue he fained ielousie.

And all this tooke she so debonairly
That all his wil, her thought it skilful thing
And euer the lenger she loued hym tenderly
And did hym honour as he were a kyng
Her harte was to hym wedded with a ryng
For so ferforthe upon trouthe is her entent
That where he goeth, her hart with him wēt

Whā she shal eate, on him is so her thought
That wel vneth of meate toke she hede
And whan she was to her rest brought
On him she thought alway tyl that she slepe
Whan he was absent, prively dothe she wepe
Thus liueth faire Annelida the quene
For false Arcyte, that dyd her al this tene

This false Arcyte, of his newfangleneſſe
For she to him so lowly was and trewe
Toke lesse deinte for her stedfasteneſſe
And saw e another lady proude and newe
And right anon he clad him in her hewe
Wote I not whether in white, reed, or grene
And falsed faire Annelida the quene

But neuertheleſſe, great wonder was it none
Though he were false, for it is ỹ kinde of mā
Sithe Lameth was, that is so longe agone
To be in loue as false as euer he can
He was the first father that began
To louen two and was in bigamie
And he founde tentes first, but yf men lye

This false Arcite, somwhat muste he faine
Whan he was falle, to couerē his traitourie
Right as an horse, ỹ can both bite & plaine
For he bare her in honde of trecherie
And swore he coude her doubleneſſe espye
And al was falseneſſe that she to him ment
thus swore this theſe & forth his way he wēt

Alas what herte might endure it
For routhe or wo, her sorowe for to tel
Or what man hath the conning or the wit
Or what man might within ỹ chambre dwel
If I to him rehersen shal the hel
That suffreth faire Annelida the quene
For false Arcite, that did all this tene

She wepeth, waileth, alwouneth pitously
To grounde deed she falleth as a stone
Crampisheth her limmes crobedly
She speketh as her witte were al agone
Other colour than alsen hath she none
Ne none other worde speketh she moch or lite
But mercy cruel herte min Arcite

And thus endureth, till that she was so mate
ỹ she ne hath foote, on which she may sustene
But forth languishing euer in this estate
Of which Arcite hath neither rothe me tene
His hert was els where newe and grene
That on her wo, ne deineth him not to thinke
Him recketh neuer whether she flete or sinke

This newe lady holdeth him so narowe
Up by the bridel, at the fraues ende
That euery worde he dred it as an arowe
Her daunger made him bothe bowe & bende
And as her luste, made him turne or wende
For she ne graunted him in her liuing
No grace, why that he hath to singe

But droue him forth, vneth list her knowe
That he was seruaunt vnto her ladiship
But leste he were proude, she held him lowe
Thus serueth he, without meate or slip
She sente him nowe to lande, & nowe to ship
And for she yaue him daunger al his fil
Therfore she had him at her owne wil

Ensample of this, ye thrifte women al
Take hede of Annelida and false Arcite
That for her list him, her dere herte call
And was so meke, therfore he loued her lite
The kinde of mannes herte is to delite
On thing that straunge is, also god me saue
For what they may not get, ỹ wold they haue

Nowe turne we to Annelida ayen
That pineth day by day in languishing
But whan she saw e that her ne gate ne geyn
Upon a day ful sorowfully weping
She cast her for to make a complaining
And with her owne hande she gan it write
And sente it to her Theban knight Arcyte.

The complaint
of Annelida to false Arcite.

SO thirled with the point of remembraunce
The swerde of sorowe, whette with false plesaunce
Myne herte bare of blisse, and blacke of hewe
That turned is to quaking all my daunce
My sewertye in waped countenaunce
Sens it auaileth nought to ben trewe
For who so trewe is, it shall her rewe
That serueth loue, and dothe her obseruaūce
Alway to one, and chaungeth for no newe

I wote my selfe as well as any wight
For I loued one, with al min hert and might
More than my self, an hundred thousāde sith
And called him my hertes lyfe, my knight
And was al his, as ferre as it was right
And whan ỹ he was glad, than was I blithe

And his diſeaſe was my dethe as ſwithe
And he ayen, his trouthe hath me plight
For euermore his lady me to kithe

Nowe is he falſe alas, and cauſeleſ
And of my wo he is ſo routhleſ
That with a worde him liſt not ones daine
To bring ayen my ſorowful herte in pees
For he is caught vp in an other lees
Right as hym lyſt he laugheth at my paine
And I ne can min herte not reſtraine
For to loue him yet alway neuertheleſ
And of all this I not to whom to plaine

And ſhulde I plaine, alas the harde ſtounde
Unto my foe, that yaue myn herte a wounde
And yet deſireth that myn harme be more
Now certes ferther woll I neuer be founde
None other helpe, my ſores for to ſounde
My deſteny hath ſhaped ſo ful yore
I wol none other medecyne ne lore
I wol ben aye there I was ones bounde
That I haue ſaid, be ſaid for euermore

Alas, where is become your gentilneſſe
your wordes full of pleſaunce & humbleneſſe
your obſeruaunce in ſo lowe maniere
Your awaitinge, and your beſineſſe
On me, that ye called your maiſtreſſe
your ſoueraine lady in this worlde here
Alas, is there neither worde ne chere
Ye vouchaſe vpon myn heuineſſe
Alas your loue, I bye it al to dere

Nowe certes ſwete, though that ye
Thus cauſeleſſe the cauſe be
Of my deedlye aduerſite
your manly reaſon ought it to reſpite
To flee your frende, and namely me
That neuer yet in no degre
Offended you, as willy he
That al wote, of wo my ſoule quite

But for I was ſo plaine Arcite
In al my workes moche and lite
And was ſo beſy you to delite
Myne honour ſaue, meke, kinde, and fre
Therfore ye put in me this wite
Alas, ye retche not amite
Though that the ſwerde of ſorowe byte
My woful herte, through your cruelte

My ſwete foe, why do ye ſo for ſhame
And thinke ye that furthered be your name
To loue a newe, and ben vntrewe aye
And put you in ſlaunder nowe and blame
And do to me aduerſyte and grame
That loue you moſt, god thou woſt alwaye
yet turne ayen, and yet be plaine ſome daye
And than ſhall this ỹ now is mis ben game
And al forgieue, while I lyue maye

Lo herte myne, al this is for to ſaine
As whether ſhal I praye or els plaine
Whiche is the way to done you to be trewe
For either mote I haue you in my chaine
Or with the deth ye mote depart vs thayne
There bethe none other meane wayes newe
For god ſo wyſely on my ſoule rewe
As verely ye ſlaine me with the paine
That mowe ye ſe on fained on mine hewe

For thus ferforth haue I my deth ſought
My ſelfe I murder with my priuie thought
For ſorowe and routh of your vnkindeneſſe
I wepe, I waile, I faſt, al helpeth naught
I voide ioy that is to ſpeake of aught
I voide company, I flye gladneſſe
Who may auaunt her better of heuineſſe
Than I, & to this plite haue ye me brought
Without gilte, me nedeth no witneſſe

And ſhould I pray, & weiuen womanhede
Nay rather deth, than do ſo foule a dede
And aſke mercy and gilteleſſe, what nede
And if I plaine what life I lede
you recketh not, that know I out of drede
And if I vnto you mine othes bede
For mine excuſe, a ſcorne ſhal be my mede
Your chere floureth, but it wol not ſede
Ful longe agon I might haue taken hede

For though I had you to morowe againe
I might as wel holde April from raine
As holde you to maken ſtedfaſt
Almyghty god, of trouthe the ſoueraine
Wher is the trouth of mã, who hath it ſlaine
She that hem loueth, ſhal hem finde as faſt
As in a tempeſt is a rotten maſt
Is that a tame beeſt, that is aye faine
To renne away, whan he is leſt agaſt

Nowe mercy ſwete, if I miſſay
Haue I aught ſaid out of the way
I not, my witte is al away
I fare as doth the ſonge of chantepleure
For nowe I plaine, and nowe I pley
I am ſo maſed that I dey
Arcite hath borne away the key
Of al my world, and my good auenture

For

For in this world there nis no creature
Walking in more discomfiture
Than I, ne more sorowe endure
For yf I slepe a furlonge way or they
Than thinketh me that your figure
Before me stante clad in asure
Efte to profre anewe assure
For to ben trewe, and mercy me to prey

The long night, this wonder syght ydrie
That on the day for sorche affray I dye
And of al this right naught iwys ye recche
Ne neuermore myne eyen two ben drye
And to your routh, & to your trouth I crye
But welaway, to ferre been they to fetche
Thus holdeth me my destenye a wretch
But me to rede out of this drede or gye
Ne may my wit (so weake is it) not stretche

Than ende I thus, sithe I may do no more
I yeue it vp for nowe and euermore
For I shal neuer efte putten in balaunce
My sikernesse, ne lerne of loue the lore
But as the swan, I haue herde say ful yore
Ayenst his deth wol sing in his penaunce
So singe I here the destenie and chaunce
Howe that Arcite Annelida so sore
Hath thrilled with the poynt of remembraunce

Whan that Annelida this woful quene
Hath of her hande written in this wise
With face deed, betwixe pale and grene
She fel a swoune, and sithe she gan to rise
And vnto Mars auoweth sacrifise
Within the temple, with a sorowfull chere
That shapen was, as ye may plainly here.

Explicit.

The assemble

Of ladies.

IN Septembre at the fallinge of the lefe
The freshe season was altogider doon
And of the corne was gathered the shefe
In a gardine aboute twayne after none
Ther were ladies walkig, as was her wone
Foure in nombre, as to my minde doth fall
And I the fifthe, the simplest of hem al

Of gentil women faire there were also
Disporting hem, eueriche after her gise
In crosse aleis walking by two and two
And some alone, after her fantasie
Thus occupied we were in diuerse wise
And yet in trouthe we were not al alone
There were knightes and squires many one

Wherof I serued, one of hem asked me
I said ayen, as it fel in my thought
To walke aboute the mase in certainte
As a woman that nothing rought
He asked me ayen whom that I sought
And of my colour, why I was so pale
For sothe (q I) and therby lithe a tale

That must me wete (q he) and that anone
Tel on let se, and make no tariyng
Abide (q I) ye ben a hastie one
I let you wete it is no litel thing
But for bicause ye haue a great longing
In your desire, this processe for to here
I shal you tel the plaine of this matere

It happed thus, that in an after noone
My felauship and I by one assent
Whan al other besinesses were doone
To passe our time, in to this mase we went
And tooke our waies, eche after our entent
Some went inward, & wēt they had gon out
Some stonde in the mid, & loked all about

And soth to say, some were ful ferre behinde
And right anon as ferforthe as the best
Other there were so mased in her minde
Alwaies were good for hem both west & west
Thus went they forth, and had but litle rest
And some her courage dyd hem sore assaile

For

for very wrathe, they dyd lep ouer ỳ raile

And as they sought hem selfe to and fro
I gate my selfe a litel auauntage
Al for wery ed, I might no further go
Though I had wō right great for my viage
So came I forth in to a straite passage
Which brought me to an herber faire & grene
Wade with benches ful crafty and cleane

That as me thought, there mist no creature
Deuise a better, by dewe proporcioun
Safe it was closed wel I you ensure
With masonrye, of compace enuiroun
Ful secretly with staires going down
In myddes ỳ place, vō turning whele certain
And vpon that a potte of Margelaine

With margerettes growinge in ordinaūce
To shewe hem selfe, as folke went to and fro
That to beholde it was a great plesaunce
And how they were accompained with mo
Ne momblisnesse and sonenesse also
The poure penses were no disloged there
Ne god wote her place was euery where

The floze & bench was paued faire & smothe
With stones sqare, of many diuers hewe
So wel ioyned, that for to say the soth
Al semed one, that none other knewe
And vnderneth the streames newe and newe
As siluer bright, springing in soche a wise
That whence it came, ye coude it not deuise

A lytel while was I al alone
Beholding wel this delectable place
My felawship were coming euerichone
So muste we nedes abyde for a space
Remembring of many diuers cace
Of tyme passed, with sighes depe
I set me downe, and there I fel a slepe

And as I slept, me thought there came to me
A gentyl woman, metely of stature
Of great worship she semed for to be
Atyred wel, not high but by mesure
Her countenaunce full sad and demure
Her colours blewe, al that she had vpon
Ther came no mo but her selfe alone

Her gowne wel was embraudred certainly
With stones after her owne deuise
In her purfil, her worde by and by
Bien & loyalement as I coude deuise
Than praide I her in any maner wise
That of her name I might haue remēbraūce
She said she was called Perseueraunce

So furthermore to speake was I bolde
Where she dwelled, I prayed her for to say
And she againe ful curtesly me tolde
My dwelling is, and hath be many a day
With a lady: what lady I you pray:
Of great estate, thus warne I you (q she)
What cal ye her: Her name is Loyalte

In what office stande ye, or in what degre
(q I to her) that wold I wete right faine
I am (q she) vnworthy though I be
Of her chambre her vsscher in certaine
This rodde I beare, as for a token plaine
Lyke as ye knowe the rule in soche seruice
Apertaining is to the same office.

She charged me by her commaundement
To warne you, and your felawes euerichone
That ye shulde come there as she is present
For a counsaile, whiche shall be nowe anone
Or seuen dayes be comen and gone
And furthermore, she bad that I shulde say
Excuse there might be none nor delay

Another thing was not forget behinde
Whiche in no wise I wolde but ye knewe
Remembre wel, and beare it in your minde
Al your felawes and ye muste come in blewe
Euerilyche able, your maters for to sewe
With more, whiche I pray you thinke vpon
Your wordes on your selues euerychon

And be not abasshed in no maner wise
As many ben, in soche an high presence
Make your request, as ye can best deuise
And she gladly wol yeue you audience
There is no grefe, nor no maner offence
Wherin ye fele that your herte his displeased
But with her help, right sone ye shal be eased

I am right glad (q I) ye tel me this
But there is non of vs that knoweth ỳ waye
As of your way (q she) ye shal not mis
Ye shal haue to gyde you day by day
Of my felawes, I can not better say
Soche one as shal tel you the waye ful right
And Diligence this gentil woman hight

A woman of right famous gouernaunce
And wel cherisshed, I tel you in certaine
Her felaushyp shal do you great plesaunce
Her porte is soch, her maners trewe & plaine

She

She with glad chere wold do her besy paine
To dryg you there, now farewel I haue done
Abyde said I, ye may not go so sone

Why so (q she) and I haue ferre to go
To yeue warning in many diuers place
To your felawes, and so to other mo
And well ye wote I haue but lytel space
Ne we yet (q I) ye must tel me this cace
If we shal any men vnto vs cal
Not one (q she) may come amonges you all

Not one than said I, eigh Benedicite
what haue I done, I pray you tel me that
Nowe by my lyfe, I trowe but wel (q she)
But euer I can byleue there is somwhat
And for to saye you trouthe more can I not
In questions I may nothing be to large
I meddle no further than my charge

Than thus (q I) do me to vnderstande
What place is there this lady is dwelling
For sothe (q she) and one sought al this lande
Fairer is none, though it were for a king
Deuised wel, and that in euery thing
The toures hie ful plesaunt shal ye finde
With phanes fresh, turning w euery wynde

The chambres and parlers of a sorte
W bay windowes, goodly as may be thought
As for daunsing, and other wise disporte
The galeries right well ywrought
That wel I wote, if ye were thyder brought
And take good hede therof in euery wise
Ye wol it thinke a very paradise

What hight ỹ place (q I) now say me that
Plesaunt regarde (q she) to tel you plaine
Of very trouth (q I) and wote ye what
It may right wel be called so certaine
But furthermore this wold I wit right fain
What I shulde do as sone as I come there
And after whom I may best enquere

A gentil woman, a porter of the yate
There shal ye finde, her name is Coũtenaũce
If ye so hap ye come erly or late
Of her wer good to haue some acquaintaũce
She can you tel howe ye shal you auaunce
And howe to come to her ladyes presence
To her wordes I rede ye geue credence

Nowe it is time I parte you fro
For in good faithe I haue great businesse
I wote right wel (q I) that it is so
And I thake you of your great gentilnesse
Your comforte hath yeuen me hardinesse
That nowe I shal be bolde withouten faile
To do after your aduice and good counsaile

Thus parted she, and I lefte all alone
With that I sawe (as I beheldе aside)
A woman come a verie goodly one
And forth withal as I had her aspide
Me thought anone it shoulde be the gide
And of her name anone I did enquere
Ful womanly she yaue me this answere

I am (q she) a simple creature
Sent from the courte, my name is Diligence
As sone as I myght come I you ensure
I taried not after I had licence
And nowe that I am come to your presence
Loke what seruice I can do or may
Commaunde me, I can no further say

I thanked her, and prayed her to come nere
Bycause I woulde se how she was araide
Her gown was blew dressed in good manere
With her deuise, her worde also that saide
Tant que ie puis and I was wel apaide
And than wist I withouten any more
It was ful trewe that I had herde before

Though we toke nowe before a litel space
It were ful good (q she) as I coude gesse.
Howe farre (q I) haue we vnto the place?
A dayes iourney (q she) but litel lesse
Wherfore I rede that we outwarde dresse
For I suppose our felawship is past
And for nothinge I wolde not we were ỹ last

Thã departed we at the springing of the daye
And forth we wente softe and easy pace
Til at the last we were on our iourney
So far outwarde, that we might se the place
Nowe let vs rest (q I) a litel space
And say we as deuoutly as we can
A Pater noster for saint Julian

With al my herte I assent with good wil
Moch better shal we spede, whan we haue
Than taried we, and said it euery dyl (done
And whan the day was past farre after none
we sawe a place, and thyder came we sone
Whiche rounde aboute was closed w a wal
Seminge to me ful lyke an hospitall

There foũde I one had brought all min aray
(A gentil woman of mine acquitaunce)

I haue

I haue meruaile (q I) what maner way
ye had knowlege of al this ordenaunce
yes yes (q she) I herde Perseueraunce
Howe she warned her felawes euerichone
And what aray ye shoulde haue vpon

Nowe for my loue (q I) this I you praye
Sith ye haue take vpon you all the paine
That ye wolde helpe me on with mine araye
For wit ye wel I wolde be gone right faine
Al this prayer nedeth not certaine
(q she) againe, come of and hye you sone
And ye shal se anone it shal be done

But this I doute me greatly, wote ye what
That my felawes be passed by and gone
I warne you (q she) that are they nat
For here they shall assemble euerichone
Notwithstandinge I counsaile you anone
Make you redy, and tary you no more
It is no harme thoughe ye be there before

So than I dressed me in mine araye
And asked her whether it were wel or no
It is right well (q she) vnto my pay
Ye nede nat care to what place euer ye go
And whiles that she and I debated so
Came Diligence and sawe me al in blewe
Sister (q she) right wel broke ye your newe

Discrecion purueiour.

Than wente we forth and met at auenture
A yonge woman, an officer seminge
What is your name (q I) good creature
Discrecion (q she) without lesinge
And where (q I) is your most abidinge
I haue (q she) this office of purchace
These purueyour that longeth to this place

Acquayntaunce herbyger.

Faire loue (q I) in al your ordenaunce
What is her name that is the herbigere
Forsothe (q she) her name is Acquaintance
A woman of right gracious manere
Then thus (q I) what straūgers haue ye here
But fewe (q she) of high degre ne lowe
ye be the first, as ferforth as I knowe

Countenaunce porter

Thus with tales we came streight to ỹ yate
This yonge woman departed was and gone
Came Diligence and knocked fast therat
Who is without) q Countenaunce) anone
Truel (q I) kaytze sister here is one
Whiche one (q she) and ther withal she lough
I Diligence, ye knowe me wel ynoughe

Than opened she the gate, and in we go
With wordes faire she saide ful gentilly
Ye are welcome ywis, are ye no mo:
Nat one (q she) saue this woman and I
Now than (q she) I pray you hertely
Take my chaumbre for a while to rest
Til your felawes come, I holde it best

I thanked her, and forth we go euericone
Til her chambre without wordes mo
Came Diligence and toke her leaue anone
Where euer ye lyst (q I) nowe may ye go
And I thanke you right hertely also
Of your labour, for whiche god do you mede
I can no more, but Jesu be your spede

Than Countenaunce asked me anone
Your felauship, where be they (q she)
For sothe (q I) they be cominge euerichone
But where they are I knowe no certainte
Without I may hem at this windowe se
Here wil I stande a waiting euer amonge
For wel I wote they wil not be longe

Thus as I stode musing ful busily
I thought to take good hede of her aray
Her gowne was blewe, this wote I verely
Of good facyon, and furred wel with gray
Upon her sleue her worde this is no nay
Whiche said thus, as my penne can endite
A moy, qui voy writen with letters white

Than forth withal she came streight to me
Your wordes (q she) fain wold I ỹ I knewe
For sothe (q I) ye shal wel knowe and se
And for my worde I haue none, this is trew
It is ynough that my clothing be blewe
As here before I had commaundement
And so to do, I am right well content

Largesse stewarde.

But tel me this I pray you hertelye
The stewarde here say me, what is her name
She hight Largesse I say you surely
A faire lady and of right noble fame
Whan ye her se ye wil reporte the same
And vnder her to byd you welcome al
There is Belchier marshal of the hal

Now al this while that ye here tary still
your own maters ye may wel haue in mind
But tel me this, haue ye brought any bill
ye ye (q I) and els I were behinde
Where is there one tel me that I may finde
To whom ỹ I may shewe my maters plaine

Surely

Surely (q̄ she) vnto the chamberlaine
Remembraunce chamberlaine.

The camberlaine (q̄ I) say ye trewe
Ye verely (said she) by myne aduise
Ben nat aferde, vnto her lowlye sewe
It shal be done (q̄ I) as ye deuyse
But ye must knowe her name in any wise
Trewly (q̄ she) to shewe you in substaunce
Without̄e fainyng her name is Remēbraūce

The secretarye she may not yet be forget
For she dothe right moche in euery thinge
Wherfore I rede, whan ye haue w̄ her ymete
Your matere hole tel her without faininge
Ye shal her fynde ful good and ful louinge
Tel me her name (q̄ I) of gentelnesse
By my good lothe (q̄ she) Auisenesse

That (q̄ I) for her is passing good
For euery byl and sedule she must se
Nowe good (q̄ I) come stande ther as I stode
My felawes be cominge, yonder they be
Is it iape, or say ye sothe (q̄ she)
In iape, nay nay, I say you for certayne
See how thei come togither twayn & twayne

Ye say ful sothe (q̄ she) that is no nay
I se coming a goodly company
They ben soch folke (q̄ I) dare I say
That lyst to loue, thinke it verely
And for my loue I pray you faythfully
At any tyme, whan they vpon me call
That ye wol be good frende to hem all

Of my frenship (q̄ she) they shal not misse
And for their ease to put therto my paine
God yelde it you (q̄ I) but take you this
Howe shal we know who is ỹ chamberlayne
That shal ye wel know by her word certaine
What is her worde syster, I pray you say
(Plus ne pourroye) thus writeth she alwaye

Thus as we stode togyder she and I
Euen at the yate my felawes were echone
So met I hem (as me thought was goodly)
And bade hem welcome al by one and one
Than came forth Countenaunce anone
Ful hertely, faire sisters al (q̄ she)
Ye be right welcome in to this countre

I counsayle you to take a litel rest
In my chambre, if it be your plesaunce
Whan ye be there, me thinke it for the best
That I go in, and cal Perseueraunce
Bycause she is of your acquaintaunce
And she also wil tel you euery thinge
Howe ye shal be ruler of your cominge

My felawes al and I, by one aduise
Were wel agreed, to do lyke as she sayde
Than we begā to dresse vs in our gise (ueide
That folke shoulde say we were nat vnpur-
And good wagers among vs there we laide
Whiche of vs was atired moste goodlest
And of vs al whiche shulde be praised best

The porter came and brought Perseueraūce
She welcomed vs in curteise manere
Thinke ye not long (q̄ she) of your attēdaūce
I wil go speke vnto the herbigere
That she puruey for your lodging here
Than wil I go vnto the chamberlaine
To speke for you, and come anone againe

And whan she departed was and gone
We sawe folkes coming without the wal
So gret people, that nombre coude we none
Ladies they were, and gentel women al
Clothed in ble we echone her worde withal
But for to knowe her worde or her deuise
They came so thicke, ỹ I ne might in no wise

With that anone came in Perseueraunce
And where I stode, she came streight to me
Ye ben (q̄ she) of min olde acquaintaunce
You to enquere the bolder wolde I be
What worde they bere eche after her degre
I you pray tel it me in secrete wise
And I shall kepe it close on warrantise

We ben fiue ladies (q̄ I) al in fere
And gentil women foure in company
When they begin to open her matere
Than shal ye knowe her wordes by and by
But as for me I haue none verely
And so I tolde Countenaunce here before
Al min aray is blewe, what nedeth more

Nowe then (q̄ she) I wol go againe
That ye may haue knowelege, what ye shuld
In soth (q̄ I) if ye wolde take the paine (do
Ye dyd right moche for vs, if ye dyd so
The rather spede, the soner may we go
Great coste alway there is in tarienge
And longe to seke it is a wery thinge

Than parted she, and came againe anone
Ye must (q̄ she) come to the chamberlaine
We be nowe redy (q̄ I) euerychone

To folowe you, whan euer ye list certaine
We haue none eloquence to tel you plaine
Beseching you we may be so excused
Our trewe meaning, that it be not refused

Than went we forth after Perseueraunce
To se the prees it was a wonder cace
There for to passe it was great combraunce
The people stode so thicke in euery place
Nowe stande ye stil (q̄ she) a litel space
And for your ease somwhat I shal assay
yf I can make you any better way

And forth she gothe, amonge hem euerychon
Making a way, that we might through passe
More at our ease, and whan she had so done
She beckende vs to come, where as she was
So after her we folowed more and las
She brought vs streight vnto ỹ chãberlayne
There lefte she vs, and than she went againe

We salued her as reason woulde it so
Ful humble besechyng her great goodnesse
In our matters that we had for to do
That she wolde be good lady and maistresse
ye be welcome (q̄ she) in sothfastenesse
And se what I can do, you for to please
I am redy, that may be to your ease

We folowed her vnto the chamber dore
Sisters (q̄ she) come ye in after me
But wete ye wel, there was a paued flore
The goodlyest, that any wight might se
And further more aboute than loked we
On eche corner, and vpon euery wal
Whiche was made of Burel and Cristal

Wherin was grauen of stories many one
First howe Phillis, of womanly pite
Dyed piteously for loue of Demophone
Nert after was the story of Tisbe
Howe she slewe her selfe vnder a tree
yet sawe I more, howe in a ryght pitous
For Antony was slaine Cleopatras (caas

That other syde was Hawes the shene
Ful vntrewly disceiued in her baine
There was also Annelida the quene
Upon Arite howe sore she did complaine
Al these stories were graued there certaine
And many mo, than I reherse you here
It were to longe to tel you al in fere

In bicause the walles shone so bright
With fine emple they were al ouer spraid
To ỹ entent folke shulde not hurte her sight
And through it the stories might be ra
Than further more I went, as I was lad
And there I sawe without any faile
A chaire set, with ful riche aparaile

And fiue stages, it was set fro the grounde
Of Calidony ful curiously wrought
With foure pomelles of golde, a very rounde
Set w̄ saphirs, as good as coude be thought
That wot ye what, if it wer through sought
As I suppose, fro this countre to Inde
Another soche it were right farre to finde

For wete ye wel, I was right nere that
So as I durst, beholding by and by
Aboue there was a riche clothe of estate
Wrought with the nedle ful straungely
Her worde theron, and thus it said truely
I endure to tel you in wordes fewe
With great letters, the better I hem knewe

Thus as we stode, a dore opened anone
A gentilwoman, semely of stature
Bering a mace, came out her selfe alone
Sothely me thought a goodly creature
She speake nothinge to lowde, I you ensure
Nor hastely, but with goodly warninge
Make rome (q̄ she) my lady is cominge

With that anone I sawe Perseueraunce
Howe she helde vp the tapet in her hande
I sawe also right in goodly ordenaunce
This great lady within the tapet stande
Comyng outwarde, I wol ye vnderstande
And after her a noble company
I coude not tel the nombre sikerly

Of their names I wolde nothing enquere
Further than soche as we wolde se we vnto
Saue a lady whiche was the chauncellere
Attemperaunce sothely her name was so
For vs nedeth with her haue mochе to do
In our matters, and alway more and more
And so forthe to tel you furthermore

Of this lady, her beaute to discriue
My conninge is to simple verely
For neuer yet the daies of my liue
So inly faire I haue sene none trewly
In her estate assured vterly
There wanted nought, I dare wel assure
That longed to a goodly creature

And furthermore to speake of her araye
I shal tel you the maner of her gowne

Of

Of clothe of golde, ful riche it is no nay
The colour blewe of right goodly facyoun
In taberde wise, the sleues hanging adown
And what purfil there was, & in what wise
So as I can I shal it you deuise

After a sorte, the coller and the bente
Lyke as Armine is made in purselinge
With great perles ful fine and orient
They were couched all after one worching
With diamondes in stede of powdering
The sleues and purfell of assise
They were made like in euery wise

Aboute her necke a sorte of faire rubyes
In white floures of right fine enamaile
Upon her heed set in the fairest wise
A cercle of great balais of entaile
That in ernest to speake without fale
For yonge and olde, and euery maner age
It was a worlde to loken on her visage

Thus coming forth to sit in her estate
In her presence we kneled down everychone
Presenting our bylles, and wote ye what
Ful humbly she toke hem by one and one
Whan we had done, than came they al anone
And did the same eche after her manere
Kneling at ones, and rising al in fere

And whã this was don, & she set in her place
The chamberlaine she did vnto her cal
And she goodly coming vnto her a pace
Of her entent knowinge nothing at al
Voyde backe the preasse (q she) vp to the wall
Make large rome, but loke ye do not tary
And take these bylles to the secretary

The chamberlaine did her commaũdement
And came againe, as she was byd to do
The secretary there beyng present
The bylles were deliuered her also
Not onely ours, but many other mo
Than the lady with good aduise againe
Anone with al, called her chamberlaine

We wol (q she) the first thing that ye do
The secretary ye do make come anone
With her billes, and thus we wil also
In our presence she rede hem euerychon
That we maye take good aduise theron
Of the ladies that ben of our counsaile
Loke this be done, withouten any faile

Whan the chamberlaine wiste of her entent
Anone she did the secretarye call
Let your billes (q she) be here present
My lady it wil: Madame (q she) I shal
And in presence she wil ye hem call
With good wil I am redy (q she)
At her pleasure, whan she commaundeth me

And vpon that was made an ordinaunce
They that came first her bylles shulde be red
Ful gentelly than said Perseueraunce
Reason it wil they were sonest spedde
Anone withal, vpon a tapet spredde
The secretary layde hem downe echone
Our bylles first she redde one by one

The first lady bearing in her deuise
Sans que iamays, thus wrote she on her byl
Complaining sore, and in ful pitous wise
Of promesse made, with faithful hert & wyll
And so broken ayenst al maner skil
Without deserte, alwaies on her partie
In this mater, desiring a remedye

Her next folowig, her word was in this wise
Vn sans changer, and thus she did complaine
Though she had be guerdoned for her seruice
yet nothing like as she that toke the paine
Wherfore she coude in no wise her restraine
But in this case se we vntil her presence
As reason wolde to haue recompence

So furthermore, to speke of other twaine
One of hem wrote after her fantasy
Onques puis leuer, and for to tel you plaine
Her complaint was ful pitous verely
For as she said, there was great reason why
As I can remembre this matere
I shal you tell the processe al in fere

Her byl was made complayninge in her gise
That of her ioye, her comforte and gladnesse
was no surete, for in no maner wise
She said therin no pointe of stablenesse
Nowe yl nowe wele, out of al sikernesse
Ful humbly desiring of her high grace
Soone to shewe her remedy in this case

Her felawe made her bil, and thus she said
In plaining wise there as she loued best
Whether she were wrothe or wele apaide
She might not se whan she wole faynest
And wrothe she was in very ernest
To tel her worde, as ferforth as I wote
Entierement vostre, right thus she wrote

And vpon that she made a great request
With hert and wil, & al that might be done
As vntil her that might redresse it best
For in her minde there might she find it sone
The remedy of that whiche was her boone
Rehersing that she had saide before
Besechinge her it might be so no more

And in like wise as they had done before
The gentyl women of our company
Put her bylles, and for to tell you more
One of hem wrote (C'est sans dire) verely
And her matere hole to specyfy
Within her byl she put it in writinge
And what it said, ye shall haue knowynge

It said god wote, and that ful pitously
Lyke as she was disposed in her herte
No misfortune that she toke greuously
Al one to her was the ioy and smerte
Sometime no thanke for al her good deserte
Other comforte she wanted none coming
And so bled, it greued her nothing

Desiring her, and lowly besechinge
That she wolde for seke a better way
As she that had ben her daies lyuing
Stedfast and trewe, and wil be alway
Of her felawe, somwhat I shal you say
Whose byl was red nexte forthe withal
And what it ment, rehersen you I shal

En Dieu est, she wrote in her deuise
And thus she said withouten faile
Her trouthe might be take in no wise
Like as she thought, wherfor she had merualle
For trouth cõtynue was wont to take auaile
In euery mattere, but al that is ago
The more pyte that it is suffred so

Moche more there was, wherof she shulde cõ-
But she thought it to great encõbraũce (plain
So moche to write, and therfore incertain
In god and her she put all her affiaunce
As in her worde is made a remembraunce
Beseching her, that she wolde in this cace
Shewe vnto her the fauour of her grace

The thirde she wrote rehersing her greuaũce
Ye, wote ye what, a pitous thing to here
For as me thought she felt great displesaũce
One might eyzt wel perceiue it by her chere
And no wonder, it sate her passyng nere
Yet lothe she was to put it in writinge
But nede wol haue course in euery thinge

Soyes asseuré, this was her worde certain
And thus she wrote in a litel space
There she loued, her labor was in vaine
For he was set al al in another place
Ful humbly desiring in that cace
Some good comforte her sorowe to appese
That she might liue more at hertes ease

The fourth surely me thought she liked wele
As in her porte, and in her behauinge
And bien monette, as ferre as I coude fele
That was her worde tyl her wel belonging
Wherfore to her she praied aboue al thing
Ful hertely to say you in substaunce
That she wold sende her good countenaunce

ye haue rehersed me these bylles all
But nowe let se somwhat of your entent
It may so hap, parauenture ye shal
Nowe I pray you while I am here present
Ye shal haue knowlege parde what I ment
But thus I say, in trouth and make no fable
The cace it selfe is inly lamentable

And wel I wote ye wol thynke the same
Lyke as I say, whan ye haue herde my byl
Now, good tel on, I hate you by saint Jame
Abyde a while, it is not yet my wil
Yet must ye wete by reason and by skil
Sith ye haue knowlege of ẏ was don before
And thus it is said without wordes more

Nothing so lefe as deth to come to me
For final ende of my sorowes and paine
What shulde I more desire as seme ye
And ye knewe al afore it for certaine
I wote ye wolde, and for to tel you plaine
Without her helpe ẏ hath al thinge in cure
I can nat thinke that it may longe endure

As for my trouth it hathe be proued wele
To say the sothe, I can say no more
Of ful longe tyme and suffred euery dele
In pacience, and kepe it all in store
Of her goodnesse, besechyng her therfore
That I might haue my thanke in soche wise
As my deserte serueth of iustise

When these billes were rad euerychone
The ladies toke a good aduisement
And hem to answere by one and one
She thought it was to moche in her entent
Wherfore she yaue hem commaundement
In her presence to come bothe one and al
To yeue hem her answere in generall

What

What dyd she than suppose ye verely?
She spake her selfe, and said in this manere
We haue wel sene your bylles by and by
And some of hem pitous for to here
We wol therfore ye knowe al this in fere
Within shorte tyme, our court of parliment
Here shal be holde in our palays present

And in al this, wherin you finde you greued
There shall ye finde an open remedy
In soche wise as ye shal be releued
Of al that ye reherse here thrroughly
As for the date ye shal knowe verely
That ye may haue a space in your coming
For Diligence shal it tel you by writing

We thanked her in our most humble wise
Our felawship, eche one by one assent
Submittinge vs lowly til her seruice
For as we thought, we had our trauaile spēt
In soche wise as we helde vs content
Than eche of vs toke other by the sleue
And forth withal, as we shulde take our leue

Al sodainly the water sprange anone
In my visage, and therwithal I woke
Where am I now thought I, al this is gone
Al maled, and vp I gan to loke
With that anon I went and made this boke
Thus simply reherling the substaunce
Bicause it shulde not be out of remembraūce

Now verely your dreame is passing good
And worthy to be had in remembraunce
For though I stand here as longe as I stode
It shulde to me be none encombraunce
I toke therin so inly great plesaunce
But tel me nowe what ye the boke do cal
For I muste wete: wyth right good wyl ye (shal

As for this boke, to say you very right
Of the name to tel you in certainte
Lassemble de dames, thus it hight
How thinke ye, that name is good parde
Nowe go farewel, for they cal after me
My felawes al, and I must after sone
Rede wel my dreme, for now my tale is done.

¶ Finis.

The conclusions

Of the Astrolabie.

Lytel Lowys my sonne, I perceiue well by certaine euidences thyne abylyte to lerne sciences, touching nombres and proporcions and also well consydre I thy besy prayer in especyal to lerne the tretyse of the Astrolabye. Than for as moche as a Philosopher saithe, he wrayeth hym in his frende, that condiscendeth to the ryghtfull prayers of his frende: Therfore I haue given thee a sufficient Astrolabye for oure orizont, compowned after the latitude of Oxenforde: vpon the whiche by mediacion of this lytell treatise, I purpose to teache thee a certaine nombre of conclusions, pertainynge to this same instrument. I say a certaine of conclusions for thre causes, the first cause is this. Truste wel that al the conclusiōs that haue be founden, or ells possiblye might be founde in so noble an instrument as in the Astrolabye, ben vnknowen perfitely to anye mortal man in this region, as I suppose. Another cause is this, that sothely in any cartes of the Astrolabye that I haue sene, ther ben some conclusions, that wol not in al thinges performe her behestes: and some of hem ben to harde to thy tender age of ten yere to conceiue. This treatise deuided in fiue parts wil I shewe the wōder light rules and naked wordes in Englishe, for Latine ne canst thou nat yet but smale, my litel sonne. But neuerthelesse sufficeth to the these trewe conclusyons in englishe, as wel as sufficeth to this noble clerkes grekes these same conclusions in greke, & to the Arabines in Arabike, And to Iewes in Hebrewe, and to the latin folke in Latyn: whiche Latyn folke had hem first out of other diuers langages, and write hem in her owne tonge, that is to saine in Latine

And god wote that in all these languages and in manye mo, haue these conclusyons ben sufficyentlye lerned and taught, and yet by diuers rules, right as diuers pathes leaden diuers folke the right waye to Rome.

Now wol I pray mebely euery person discrete, that redeth or heareth this litel treatise to haue my rude ententing excused, and my superfluite of wordes, for two causes. The

first cause is, for that curious endityng and harde sentences is ful heuy at ones, for soch a childe to lerne. And the secōde cause is this, that sothely me semeth better to writen vnto a childe twise a good sentēce, than he foriete it ones. And Lowis if it so be that I shewe the in my lith Englishe, as trew conclusions touching this mater, and not onely as trewe but as many and subtil conclusions a,s bene yshewed in latin, in any comon treatise of the Astrolabye, conne me the more thanke, and praye god saue the kinge, that is lorde of this langage, and all that him faith beareth, and obeieth euerich in his degre, the more and the lasse. But consydre thwell, that I ne vsurpe not to haue foundē this werke of my labour or of mine engin . I nam but a leude compilatour of the laboure of olde Astrologiens, and haue it translated in myn englishe onely for thy doctrine: and with this swerde shal I slene enuy.

¶ The first party.

The firste partye of this treatise shall reherce the figures, and the membres of thyne astrolaby, bycause that thou shalte haue the greater knowinge of thine owne instrument.

¶ The seconde party.

The seconde partye, shall teche the to werken the very practike of the foresaid conclusions, as ferforthe and also narowe as may be shewed in so smale an instrumente portatife, aboute. For wel wote euery Astrologien, that smallest fractions ne wol not be shewed in so smal an instrument, as in subtil tables calculed for a cause.

¶ The thirde partye.

The thirde partye shal containe diuers tables, of longitudes and latitudes of sterres, fixe in the Astrolabie. And tables of the declinacions of the Sonne, and tables of the longitude of cities and townes. And tables as wel for the gouernacion of the clocke, os for to finde the altitude meridian, and many an other notable conclucion after the kalēders of the reuerent clerkes frere Jhō Som, and frere. N. Lenne.

¶ The fourth partye.

The fourth partye shall be a theorike, to declare the meaninge of the celestiall bodyes, wyth the causes, the whiche the fourth partie in special shal shew in a table of the very meuinge of the moone, from one to one, euery daye and euery signe, after thin almanacke. Upon the which table there foloweth a canon, sufficyent to teach as wel in maner of workynge in the same conclusions, as to knowe in our orziōte, with which degre of zodiack the moone ariseth in any latitude, and the arisinge in any planete after his latitude fro the eclyptyke lyne

¶ The fyfte partye.

The fythe partye shall ben an introductorye, after ẏ statutes of our doctours on whiche, thou mayste lerne a great parte of the generall rules of theorike in Astrologie, In whiche fyfthe partie thou shalt finde tables of equaciōs of houses, after the latitude of Oxenforde, and tables of dignitees of planettes, and other noteful thinges, if god vouche safe and his mother the mayden, mo than I behete.

¶ The rynge.

Thy Astrolabye hath a ringe to putten on thy thomb one thy right honde, in takinge of the heyght of thinges. And take kepe, from hence forwarde I wol clepe the heyght of heuy thing, that is take by the rule, the altytude withouten mo wordes.

¶ The turet.

This ringe ronneth in a maner of a turet, fastened to the moder of thin Astrolabye, in a roume a space that it distroubeleth not the instrument to hangen after his right centure. The moder of thin Astrolabye is thickest by the brinks, that is the vtmoste ring with degrees: and al the mydedle within the rynge shall be thynner, to receiue the plates for diuers clymates, and also for the rethe, that is shape in maner of a net, or els after the webbe of a loppe.

¶ The moder.

The moder of thin Astrolabye is the thickest plate perced with a large hole, that receiueth in her wōbe the thine plates compowned of diuers clymats, and thy reete shapen in maner of a net or of a web of a lope

¶ Of the foure lynes

This moder is deuided on the backhalfe with a line, that cometh discendynge fro the ryng down to the netherest bordure, the which line, fro the forsaid ring vnto to the centre of ẏ large hole amidde, is cleped

south

Southe line, or els the line Meridionall: and the remenaunt of this line doune to the bordure is cleaped the Northe line, or all the line of the Midnight.

¶ Of lower lines, East, West, Northe, and Southe,

Ouerthwarte this forelaied long line, there crosseth hym an other line of the same length, fro Easte to Weste, of the which line, from a littel crosse in the bordure vnto the centure of the large hole, is cleaped the East line, or els the line Oriental: and the remenaunte of the line, fro the forelaied Orientall vnto the bordure, is icleaped the Weste line, or the line Occidentall.

Now hast thou here the fower quarters of thin Astrolabie, deuided after the fower principall plages or quarters of the firmament.

¶ Whiche is the right side, and whiche is the left.

THE Easte side of the Astrolabie, is cleaped the right side, and the Weste side is cleaped the lefte side. Foryet not this little Lowis. Put the ring of thyne Astrolabie, vppon the thombe of thy right hande, and then woll his right side bee towarde thy left side, and his left side woll be towarde thy right side. Take this rule generall, as well on the backe, as on the wombe side. Vppon the ende of this Easte line (as I first saied) is imarked a little crosse, where as euermore generally is cõsidered, the entryng of the Easte degree, in the whiche the Sonne ariseth.

¶ The degrees fro the the East line, to the Southe.

FRO the little crosse, vp to the ende of the Meridionall line vnder the ryng shalt thou finde the bordure, deuided with. xc. degrees, and by that same porcioñ is euery quarter of thyn Astrolabie deuided, ouer the whiche degrees, there been nombers of Augrim, that deuiden thilke same degrees fro fiue to fiue, as sheweth by longe strikes bitwene: of the whiche by long strikes the space bitwene, conteineth a mile waie, and euery degree of thilke bordure, conteineth fower Minutes, that is to saie, fower minutes of an houre.

¶ Of the twelue signes, Aries, Taurus, Gemini, Cancer, and the other,

VNder the Compasse of thilke degrees, been written the names of the twelue signes, as Aries, Taurus, Gemini, Cancer, Leo Virgo, Libra, Scorpio, Sagittarius, Capricornus, Aquarius, and Pisces. And the nombers of the degrees of the signes, been written in Augrime aboue, and with long diuisions, from fiue to to fiue, deuideth from the tyme that the signe entreth vnto the laste ende. But vnderstande well, that these degrees of signes, been eueriche of hem considered of. lx. Minutes, and euery Minute of. lx. secondes, and so forthe into small fractions infinite, as saieth Alcabucius. And therefore knowe well, that a degree of the bordure, containeth fower Minutes, and a degre of a signe, containeth. lx. minutes, and haue this in minde.

¶ The cercle of the daies.

NExte this followeth the cercle of the daies, that been figured in maner of the degrees, that conteinen in nomber three hundred, three score and fiue, deuided also with longe strikes, from fiue to fiue, and the nombers of Augrime, written vnder the cercle.

¶ The cercle of the twelue monethes.

NExte the cercle of daies, followeth the Cercle of the twelue names of the Monethes, that is to saie, Januarius, Februarius, Marcius, Aprill, Maius, Junius, Julius, August, September, October, Nouember, December.

The names of these Monethes taken her names, some for properties, and some by statutes of Emperours, & some by other Lordes of Roome. Eke of these Monethes, as liked to Julius Cesar, and Cesar Augustus, some wer icompouned of diuers nombers of daies, as July and August. Then hath Januarius xxxi. daies, Februarius, xxviii. Marcius. xxxi Aprill thirtie, Maie. xxxi. Junius thirtie, August. xxxi. September thirtie. October thirtie and one. Nouember thirtie. December xxxi. Natheless although that Julius Cesar toke two daies out of Feuerire, and put hem in his Monethe of July, and Augustus Cesar cleaped the Monethe of Auguste after his name, and ordained it of one and thirtie dais yet trust well that the sõne dwelleth therfore

neuer the moze, ne the lasse in one signe, then in an other.

¶ The names of the holie daies.

Then followeth the names of the holie daies in the Kalẽder, and next hem the letters. A. B. C. on whiche thei fallen.

¶ The scale of the Astrolabie.

Vert the forezsaied cercle of the A. B. C. vnder ẏ crosse line is marked the scale, in maner of twoo Squires, oz els in maner of ledders, that serueth by his. xrii. poinctes, and his diuisions of full many a subtell conclusion of this forezsaied scale: for the crosse line vnto the verie angle, is cleaped Vmbra recta, oz els vmbra extensa, and the neather partie vmbra versa.

¶ The Rule.

Then hast thou a brzoade rule, that hath on euery ende a square plate, parted with certaine holes, some moze, and some lesse, to receiuẽ the stremes of the sonne by daie, and eke by mediacion of thyne ye, to knowe the altitude of the sterres by night.

¶ The pin, whiche is imagined to be pole artike and the hozse.

Then is there a large pin, in maner of an exiltre, that goth through the hole that halte the tables of the climathes in the teeth, in the wombe of the moder, throwe whiche pin there goeth a little wedge, the whiche is cleped the Hozse, that straineth all these partes togither. This forezsaid great pin, in maner of an exiltre, is imagined to be the pole artike in thyne Astrolabie.

¶ For lines on the wombe side.

The wombe side of thyne Astrolabie is also diuided, with a longe crosse in fower quarters, from the East to weste, and from the Southe to Nozthe, from right side to left side, as is the backeside.

¶ The degrees of the wombe side.

The bozder of whiche wombe side, is deuided fro the poinct of the East line, vnto the poinct of the South line, vnder the rynge in. xc. degrees, and by thesame proporciõ, is euery quarter deuided, as is the backside, that amounteth three hundzed. lx. degrees. And vnderstande well, that the degrees of this bozder, been aunswerynge and consentyng to the degrees of Equinoctiall, that is deuided in thesame nomber, as euery other cercle is in the hie heauen.

This bozder is deuided also with. xriii. letters, and a small crosse aboue the South line that sheweth the. xriiii. houres equales of the cloche. And I haue saied fiue of these degrees maken a mile waie, and three mile waie maken an houre, and euery degree of this bozder containeth fower Minutes, and euery Minute fowertie secondes. Nowe haue I tolde thee twise, and foz the moze declaracion.

¶ Of the principall cercles.

The plate vnder the reete is discriued with three cercles, of whiche the least is cleaped the Cercle of Cãcer, bicause ẏ the hedde of Cancer tourneth euer moze concentrike, vppon thesame Cercle. In this halfe of Cancer is the greatest declinacion Nozthward of the sonne and therefoze is he icleped Solsticium of Sommer, whiche declinacion after the Ptholome is. xriii. degrees and fiftie Minutes, as well in Cancer, as in Capzicozne. This Signe of Cancer is cleped the Tropike of Sommer, of Tropos, that is to saine, ayenward. The middell cercle in widnesse of this three, is cleaped the cercle Equinoctial, vpon whiche turneth euer moze, ẏ heddes of Aries and Libza. And vnderstande well, that euermoze this cercle Equinoctiall tourneth iustlie fro very Easte, to very Weste, as I haue shewed in the sphere solid. This same cercle is cleped also the wayer of the daie. For when the Sonne is in the head of Aries and Libza, then been daies and nightes like of lengthe, in all the wozlde, and therfoze been these twoo signes called Equinoctis. And al that moueth within these heddes of Aries and Libza, is icalled Nozthward and all that meueth without these heddes, his meuyng is cleped Southward, as foz the Equinoctiall, take kepe of ẏ latitudes nozthe and South, and forget it not: but this cercle Equinoctiall been considered the. xriiii. houe of the cloche. For euermoze the arisyng of. xv. degrees of the Equinocttial, maketh an houre equall of the closke. This Equinoctiall is cleped the midwaie of the first meuyng, oz els of the Sonne. And note that the first meuyng, is cleaped meuyng of the first mouable of the eight Sphere, whiche meuyng is fro East to West, & again into East. Also it is cleped girdell of the firste meuyng. For it departeth the first meuable, that is to sain, ẏ sphere in twoo

like

like parties, euen distaunte fro the Poles of this worlde. The widest of these three cercles principall, is cleaped the cercle of Capricorne, and tourneth euermore cõcentrike, vpon the same cercle. In the hedde of this forsaied Capricorne, is the greatest declinacion Southwarde of the Sonne. And therefore it is cleped Solsticium of winter. This signe of Capricorne, is also clepead the Tropike of winter. For then beginneth the sonne to come again to vs warde.

Of the almicanteras, the signet, and what is thine Orizont.

Vpon this forsaied plate been compassed certain cercles, that highten almicanteras: of whiche some of hem semen parfite cercles, and some semen imparfite. The centure that standeth a middest the narowest cercle, is cleaped the signet. And the nethereste cercle, that deuideth the twoo emisperies, that is the partie of the heauen aboue the yearthe, and the partie beneth. These almicanteras been compouned by twoo and twoo, all be it so that on diuers Astrolabies, some almicanteras been deuided by one, and some by twoo, and some by three, after the quantite of the Astrolabie. This forsaied signet is ymagined to bee the very poinct ouer the croune of thy hedde, and also this signet is the very pole of the orizont in euery region.

What been thyne azimutes.

From this signet (as it semeth) there comen croked strikes, like to the clawes of a loppe, or els like to ỹ werke of a womans calle, in keruing ouerthwart the almicanteras, and these same strikes or diuisions, been cleaped Azimutes and thei deuiden the Orizontes on thine Astrolabie in. xxiiii. diuisions. And these Azimutes serue, to knowe the costes of the firmamente, and to other conclusions, as for to knowe the signet of the Sonne, and of euery sterre.

Of the. xii. houres of the planettes.

Yerte these Azimutes, vnder the cercle of Cancer, been the twelue diuisions embolite, moche like to the shappe of the Azimutes, that shewen the spaces of houres of planettes.

Thy reete or els thy zodiake.

Thy Reete of thyne Astrolabie, whiche is thy Zodiake shapen in maner of a Nette, or of a lop webbe, after the olde discripcion, whiche thou maiest tourne vp and doune, as thy self liketh conteineth certaine nomber of Sterres fixe, with her longitudes and latitudes determinate, if so bee that the maker haue not erred. The names of the Sterres been written in the margin of thy Reete, there thei sit, of the whiche Sterres the small poincte is cleaped the Centure. And vnderstande, that all the Sterres sittyng within the zodiake of thyne Astrolabie, been cleped Sterres of the Norty, for thei arisen by the Norty East line, and all the remenaunt fixes out of the zodiake, been icleped Sterres of the South, but I saie not that thei arisen all by the Southe East line, witnesse of Aldeberan and also Algomisa. Generally vnderstonde this rule, that thilke Sterres, that been cleaped Sterres of the Northe, arisen rather then the degree of her longitude, and all the Sterres of the South, arisen after the degree of her longitude, that is to saine, Sterres in thyne Astrolabie.

The measure of longitude of Sterres, itaken in the line ecliptike of heauen, vnder the whiche line, when the Sonne and the Mone been line righte, els in the superficie of this line, then is the eclips of the Sonne or of the Moone, as I shall declare and eke the cause why: but sothely the Ecliptike line of the zodiake, is the vttereste bordure of the zodiake, there thy degrees been marked. The zodiake of thy Astrolabie is shapen as a Compasse, whiche that containeth a large brede, as after the quantitie of thy Astrolabie, in ensample that the zodiake of heauen is imagined to be a superficies, conteinyng the latitude of twelue signes, where as all the remenaunte of cercles in heauen, been imagined verie lines, withouten any latitude amiddes the celestial zodiake is imagined a line, which that is cleped the Ecliptike line, vnder the whiche line, is euermore the waie of the sonne. Thus been there fixe degrees of the zodiake, if that one side of the line, and fixe degrees on that other. The zodiake is deuided in twelue principall deuisions, that departen the. xii. signes, and for the straitnes of thyne Astrolabie, thē is euery small deuision in a signe iparted by

two

two degrees and twoo, I meane degrees conteinyng. lx. Minutes, and this forsaied heuenisshe Zodiake, is cleped the circle of the Signes, or the circle of beastes. For Zodiake in langage of Grebe, sowneth beastes in Latine tongue, and in the Zodiake been the xrii. Signes, that haue names of beastes, bicause when the Sonne entreth in any of the Signes, he taketh the propertie of soche beastes, or els for that the sterres that been there, been fired, been disposed in signe of beastes, or shape like beastes, or els when Planettes, been vnder the Signes, thei transmue vs by her influence, operacions, and effectes. And vnderstande also, that when an hotte Planette, cometh into an hote Signe, then entereth his heate, and if a Planette be cold, then amenuseth his coldnesse, bicause of the hotte Signe. And by this conclusion, maiest thou taken ensample in all Signes, be thei moiste or drie, mouable or fire, reckenyng the qualitie of the Planettes, as I first saied. And euerich of these. xii. signes, hath respect to a certaine parcell of the bodie of a man, and hath it in gouernaunce: as Aries hath thyne head and Taurus thy necke and thy throte, Gemini thyne arme holes and thyne armes, and so foorthe, as shall bee shewed more plainlie, in the fifth parte of this treatise. The Zodiake, the whiche is partie of the eight Sphere, ouerherueth the Equinoctial, and he ouerherueth hym again in euen partes, and that one halfe declineth Southwarde, and that other Northwarde, as plainlie declareth the treatise of the Sphere.

The Labell.

When hatte thou a labell, that is shapen like a rule, saue that it is strait and hath no plates on either ende, but with the smal poinct of the forsaied labell, shalt thou calcule the equacions in the bordure of thyne Astrolabie, as by thin almurie.

The Almurie, the denticle of Capricorne, or els the calculere.

Thyne almurie is cleped, the denticle of Capricorne, or els the calculere, this same almurie set fixe in the hed of Capricorne, and it serueth of many a necessarie conclusion in equacion of thynges, as shall be shewed.

Here beginneth the conclusions of thine Astrolabie, to finde the degree in the whiche the Soonne is daie by daie, after his course about.

Reken and knowe, whiche is the daie of the moneth, and lay thy rule vppon the same daie, and then woll the verie poinct of thy rule, verely sitten on the bordure, vpon the degree of the Sonne. Ensample as thus. The yere of our Lorde a thousande three hundred, ninetie and one, the. xii. daie of Marche at middaie, I would knowe the degree of the Soonne, I sought in the backe halfe of myne Astrolabie and founde the circle of the daies, the whiche I knewe by the names of the Monethes, witten vnder thesame Circle: Tho laied I my Rule ouer the forsaied daie, and founde the poincte of my Rule in the border, vppon the first degree of Aries, a litle within the degree: and thus knewe I this conclusion.

An other daie I would knowe the degree of my Soonne, and this was at Middaie in the. xiii. daie of December, I founde the daie of the moneth in maner as I saied: tho laied I my Rule vpon the forsaied. xiii. daie, and founde the poincte of my Rule, vpon the first degree of Capricorne, a little within the degree, and then had I of this conclusion the verie experience.

To knowe the altitude of the Sonne either of celestiall bodies.

Put the ryng of thyne Astrolabie, vppon thy right thombe, and tourne thy lifte side again the light of the Sonne, and remeue thy Rule vp and doune, till the streame of the Sonne, shine through bothe holes of the Rule: looke then how many degrees, this Rule is areised fro the little crosse vpō the East line, and take there the altitude of thy Sonne: and in this same wise maiest thou knowe by nighte, the altitude of the Moone, or of the bright Sterres. This Capiter is so generall euer in one, that there needeth no more declaracion, but forget it not.

To knowe the degree of the Sonne, and of thy Zodiake, by the daies in the backside of thyne Astrolabie.

Then

When if thou wilte wete the rechenyng to knowe, whiche is the daie in thy Kalender of the moneth, that thou art in, laie thyne Astrolabie, that is to saie, the allidatha, vpon the daie in the Kalender of thyne Astrolabie, and he shal shewe thee thy degree of the Sonne.

¶ To knowe euery tyme of the daie, by light of the Sonne, and euery tyme of the nighte, by the Sterres fire, and eke to knowe by night or by daie, the degree of the signe that ascendeth on theast Orizont, which is cleped comenly ascendent.

Take the altitude of the Sonne, when thee liste, as I haue saide, and set the degre of the Sonne (in case that it bee before the middle of the daie) emong thin almicãteras, on the Easte side of thyne Astrolabie: and if it be after the middle of the daie, sette the degree of the Sonne, vpon the weste side. Take this maner of settyng, for a generall rule ones for euer.

And when thou haste isette the degree of the Sonne, vppon as many almicanters of height, as was the Sonne, taken by thy rule, laie ouer thy Labell, vppon the degree of the Sonne, and then woll the poincte of the labell, sitten in the bordure, vpon the very tide of the daie. Ensample of this.

The yere of our Lorde a thousande, three hundred, ninetie and one, the twelue daie of Marche, I would knowe the tide of the daie, I tooke the altitude of my Sonne, and found that it was. xxb. degrees, and. xxx. Minutes of height of the bordure in the backeside, tho tourned I myne Astrolabie, and bicause it was before middaie, I tourned my reete, and set the degree of the Soonne, that is to saie, the firste degree of Aries, in the right side in myne Astrolabie, vppon the. xxb. degree, and xxx. minutes of height, emong my almicanteras: Tho laied I my label, vpon the degree of my Sonne, and found the poinct of my labell in the bordure, on the capital letter, that is cleaped an. E. Tho reckened I all the capital letters, fro the line of Midnight, vnto the forsaied letter E. and founde it was nine of the Cloche of the daie. Tho looked I ouer my East Orizont, and found there the twelue degree of Geminius ascendyng, whiche that I tooke for myne ascendente, and in this wise had I the experience for euermore, in whiche maner I would knowe the tide of the daie, and eke myne ascendente. Tho would I wete that same night followyng, the houre of the nighte, and wrought in this wise: emong an heape of Sterres, it liked me to take the altitude, of the faire white Sterre, that is cleaped the Alhabor, and founde her sittyng, on the weste side of the line of Middaie, eighten degrees of heighte, taken by my Rule on the backside. Tho sette I the Centure of this Alhabor, vpon eightene degrees, emong my almicanteras, vpon the weste side, bicause that he was founde vpon the weste side: tho laied I my Labell ouer the degree of the Soonne, that was discended vnder the weste Orizont, and reckened all the letters capitalles, fro the line of Middaie, vnto the poincte of my label in the bordure, and founde that it was after noone, passed seuen of the cloche, the space of a leuen degrees. Tho looked I doune vppon my Easte Orizont, and founde there twentie degrees of Libra ascendyng, whom I tooke for myne ascendente, and thus learned ones for euer, to knowe in whiche maner, I should come to the houre of the nighte, and too myne ascendent, as verelie as maie be taken, by so small an instrumente. But natheless, this rule in generall will I warne thee for euer: ne make thou neuer none ascendente at noone of the daie. Take a iuste ascendent of thyne Astrolabie, and haue set iustlie a cloke, when any celestiall bodie, by the whiche thou wenest gouerne thilke thynges, been nie the Southe line, for trust well, when the Sonne is nere the Meridional line, the degree of the Sonne remaineth, so long concentrike vpon thyne almicanteras, that sothelie thou shalt erre fro the iuste ascendente. The same conclusion saie I, by my centure of my Sterre fire by the night, and moreouer by experiẽce, I wote wel that fro our Orizont, fro enleuen of the cloche, vnto one, in takyng of the iuste ascendente, in a portatife Astrolabie, it is to harde to knowe, I meane from enleuen of the cloche before noone, till one of the cloche next followyng: and for the more declaracion, loe here thy figure nexte after this rule that followeth.

¶ To knowe the degree of the Sonne in thy Zodiake, by the daies, in the backside of thyne Astrolabie.

Then

When thou wolte weten, to recken and knowe, whiche is the daie of the moneth, that thou art in, and lay the rule of thy Astrolaby, that is to saie, the allidatha vpon the daie, in the Kalender of thine Astrolabie, and he shall shewe thee thy degree of Sonne.

¶ Speciall declaracion of the ascendente.

The ascendente sothlie, is as well in all Natiuities, as in questions, and as in eleccions of tymes is a thyng, whiche that these Astrologiens greatlie obseruen, wherefore me semeth conuenient, sens I speake of the ascendent, to make of it a speciall declaracion. The ascendent sothlie, to take it at the largeste, is thilke degree that ascendeth, at any of these foresaied tymes, on the Easte Orizon: and therefore, if that any Planet ascende at thilk same time, in the foresaid same gree of his lõgitude, men saie that thilke Planet is in Horoscopo, but sothelie the hous of that ascendent, that is to saie, the firste hous or the East angle, is a thynge more broade and large, for after the statutes of Astrologiens, what celestiall body, that is .v. degrees aboue thilke degree, that ascendeth on the Orizont, or within that nomber, that is to saine, nere the degree that ascendeth, yet recken thei thilk planete in the ascendent, and what Planet that is vnder thilke degree, that ascendeth ỹ space of .xv. degrees, yet saine thei that Planette is like to hym, that is the houre of the ascendẽt. But sothelie, if he passe the boundes of the foresaied spaces, aboue or beneath, thei saine that thilke Planette is fallyng fro the ascendent: yet sain these Astrologiens, that the ascendent, and eke the Lorde of the Ascendent, maie be shapen for to bee fortunate, or infortunate: as thus. A fortunate ascendent cleapen thei, when that no wicked Planette of Saturne or Mars, or els the taile of the Dragon, is in the hous of the ascendente, ne that no wicked Planette, haue no aspecte of enemitie vppon the ascendente: But thei woll caste, that thei haue fortunate Planet in her ascendente, and yet in his felicitie, and then saie thei that it is well. Furthermore, thei saine that Fortune of an ascendente, is the contrary of these foresaid thinges. The lorde of the ascendente saine thei, that he is fortunate, when he is in good place for the ascẽdent, and eke the Lorde of the ascentent, is in an angle, or in a succedent, where he is in his dignitie, and coumforted with frendly aspectes receiued, and eke that he maie seen the ascendent not retrograde ne combust, ne ioined with no shrewe in thesame signe, ne that he bee not in his discencion, ne reigned with no Planette in his discencions, ne haue vppon hym none aspecte infortunate, and then thei saine that he is well.

Natheless, these been obseruaunces of iudiciall matter, and rites of Painims, in whiche my spirite hath no faithe, ne knowyng of her horoscopũ, for thei saine, that euery signe is departed in thre euen partes, by .x. degrees and the ilke porcion thei cleapen a face. And although a Planette haue a latitude fro the Ecliptike, yet sain some folke, so that the planette arise in that same signe, with any degree of the foresaied face, in whiche his longitude is reckened. And yet is the Planette in horoscopo, be in natiuities or in eleccion.

¶ To knowe the verie equacion of the degrees of the Sonnne, if it so be that it fall betwixt .ii. almicãteras.

For almoche as the almicanteras of thyne Astrolabie, been compouned by twoo and two, where as some almicanteras in sondrie Astrolabies, be compouned by one, or els by twoo, it is necessarie to thy learnyng, to teache thee firste to knowe, and wriche with thyne instrumente: wherfore, when ỹ the degree of the Sonne, falleth betwene twoo almicanteras or elles if thyne almicanteras, been grauen with euer greate a pointe of a Compace, for bothe these thynges maie cause erroure, as well in knowyng of the tide of the daie, as of the verie ascendente. Thou muste werken in this wise: set the degree of the Sonne, vpon the higher almicanteras as of bothe. And waite well, where the almurie toucheth the bordure, and set there a pricke of ynke, set adoune againe the degree of the Sonne, vpon the neather almicanteras of bothe, and sette there an other pricke: remeue then thy almurie in the bordure, euen amides bothe prickes and this woll leaden iustlie the degree of the Sonne, to sit betwene bothe the almicanteras in his right place. Laie then the label on the degree of the Sonne, and finde in the bordure

dure the very tyde of the day or of the night. And also verely shalt thou synde vpon thy East orizonte thin ascendent.

¶ To knowe the syrynge of the dawnyng and the ende of the euening, the whiche ben clepeth the two coepusculis.

SEtte the nadire of thy sonne vpon. 18. degrees of height amonge thyn almycanteras on the west syde, and lay thy label on the degree of the Sonne, and than shall the pointe of the label shewe the syrynge of the daye: also sette the nadire of the sonne vpon the. 18. degrees of height amōg thin almicanteras on the eest side, and lay ouer thy label vpon the degre of the sonne, and wyth the poynte of thy labell synde in the bordure the ende of thin eueninge, that is very night. The nadyre of the sonne is thylke degre that is oppolyte to the degre of the sonne in the. 320. signe, as thus. Euery degree of Aries by order, is nadire to euery degree of Libra by order, and Taurus to Scorpion, Gemini to Sagitarius, Cancer to Capricorne, Leo to Aquary, Virgo to Pices. And yf any degree in thy zodiake be derke, hys nadire shall declare him.

¶ To knowe the arche of the day, that some folke callen the day artificial, fro the sonne rising tyl it go downe

SEtte the degre of the sonne vpon thin Eest orizonte, and lay thy label on the degree of the sonne, and at the poynte of thy label in ỹ bordure sette a pricke: turne than thy reete aboute, tyll the degree of the sonne syt vpon the Weste orizonte, and laye the labell vpon the same degre of the sonne, and at the poynte of the labell sette another pricke. Rekē than the quantite of time in the bordure betwixe both prickes, and take there thine arche of the daye: the remnaunt of the bordure vnder the orizonte, is the arche of the night. Thus maist thou reken bothe arches of euery porcion where that thou likeste, and by this maner of werking maist thou se how longe that any sterre fyxe dwelleth aboue the erthe, fro the time that he riseth tyll he go to reste. But the daye naturell, that is to sayne. 24. houres, is the reuolucion of the equinoctiall, with as moche partye of te zodiake, as the sonne of his proper mowinge passethe in the meane while.

¶ To turne the houres inequalles, and the houres equalles.

TO knowe the nombre of the degrees in the houres inequalles, and departe hem by. 15. and take there thyne houres equalles.

¶ To knowe the quantite of the day bulgare that is to say, fro syrynge of the day vnto the very night.

KNowe thy quantyte of thyne coepusculis, as I haue it taught in the chapiter before, and adde hem to the arche of the day artificial, and take there thy space of al ỹ hole day bulgare vnto the very nyght. In the same maner mayste thou werke to knowe the bulgare nyght.

¶ To knowe the houres in equales by daye.

VNderstande well that these houres inequales been cleped houres of the planettes: And understonde wel that sometyme ben the longer by daye than they be by night, and somtyme contrarie. But vnderstand thou well, that euermore generally the houres inequale of the daye, wyth the houres inequale of the night, conteineth. 30. degrees of the bordure, the whiche bordure is euermore answeringe to the degrees of the equinoctiall, wherfore depart the arche of the daye artificiall in. 15. and take there the quantite of the houre inequale by day, and if thou abate the quantite of the houre inequale by daye out of. 360. degrees, than shall the remnaunt that leauetly performe the hour inequale by night.

¶ To knowe the quantite of houres equales.

THe quantytes of houres equales, that is to saine the houres of the clocke, bē departed by. 15. degrees alredy in the bordure of thy Astrolabie, as wel by night as by daye, generally for euermore. What nedeth any more declaracion: wherfore whan thee lyste to knowe how many houres of the clocke ben passed, or any parte of any of these houres ben to comen, fro soch a time to soche a time, by day or by nygth, knowe the degree of thy Sonne, and laye thy labell on it: than

turne thy rete aboute ioyntly with thy label and with the point of it reche in the bozder fro the Sonne arisynge, in to the same place there thou desiresst by day as by night. This conclusion woll I declare in the fourthe partye of the laste chapiter of this tretyse, so openly that there shal lacke no wozde that nedeth declaracion.

¶ Speciall declaracion of the houres of the planettes.

VNderstand wel that euermoze fro the arising of the Sonne tyl it go to reste, the nadyre of the Sonne shall shewe the houre of the planet, and fro that time forwarde al the night tyll the Sonne arise, than shall the very degre of the Sonne shewe the houre of the planet. Ensample as thus. The. 13. day of Marche fel vpon a saturday parauēture, and at the arising of the Sonne I founde the second degree, of Aries sittinge vpon min Eest ozizonte, al be it was but lytel. Than founde I the seconde degree of Libza nadire of my Sonne, discendynge on my west ozizonte, vpon whiche west ozizont euery day generally at the Sonne arisyng, entrethe the houre of any planet, vnder the forsaid weste ozizonte, after the whiche planete the day beareth his name, & endeth in the nexte strike of the planet, vnder the forsaid weste ozizonte: and euer as the Sonne clymbeth vpper and vpper, so gothe his nadire downer and downer, and echinge fro soch strikes the houres of planettes by ozder, as they sitten in heuen. The fyrst hour inequale of euery saturday is Saturne, and the seconde to Jupiter, ỹ thirde to Mars the fourth to the Sonne, the fyfth to Uenus, the sixt to Mercurius, the seueuth to the Mone, & than ayen the eight to Saturne, the nineth to Jupiter, the thenthe to Mars, the eleuenth to the Sōne, the twelfth to Uenus. And nowe is my Sōne gon to rest as for that saterday, than shewethe the very degre of the Sonne the houre of Mercury, entring vnder my weste ozizont at euen. And nexte him succedeth the Moone, and so forthe by ozder planete after planet, in houre after houre al the night longe til the Sonne arise. Now riseth the Sonne the sonday by the mozowe, & the nadyre of the Sonne vpon the weste ozizont, shewethe me the entrynge of the houre of the forsaid Sonne. And in this maner succedeth planete vnder planete fro Saturne vnto the moone, and fro the moone vp agayne to Saturne, houre after houre generally, and thus knowe I this conclusion.

¶ To knowe with which degree of the zodyake any sterre fyre in thin Astrolabie ariseth vpon the Eest ozyzonte, although the ozizonte be in an other signe

SEtte the centure of the sterre vpon the Eest ozizonte, and loke what degree of anye signe ỹ sitteth vpon the same ozizonte at the same tyme: And vnderstande wel that with the same degree ariseth ỹ same sterre. And this meruailous arisinge with a stronge degree in another sygne, is bycause that the latitude of the sterre fyre is either Nozthe oz Southe fro the equinoctial. But sothly the latitudes of planettes bē comenly irechened fro the ecliptike, bycause that none of hem declineth but few degrees out fro the bzede of the zodiake. And take good kepe of this chapiter of arisinge of celestiall bodyes, for ther trusteth wel, that neither moone neither sterre in our ambolike ozizont, that ariseth with ỹ same degre of his longitude, saue in one case, and that is whan they haue no longitude fro the eclyptycke lyne. But neuer the lesse somtime is euerych of these planettes vnder the same lyne.

¶ To knowe the declinacion of any degree in the zodiake, fro the equinoctiall cercle.

SEtte the degree of anye sygne vpō the lyne meridional, & reken his altitude in the almicanteras, fro the Eest ozizonte vp to the same degree sette in the forsaide lyne, and sette there a pzicke: Turne vp than thy reete and set the heed of Aries oz Libza in the same meridional line, and set there another pzicke. And whan that this is done, cōsider the altitudes of hem bothe: for sothly the differēce of thilke altitude is the declinacion of thilke degree fro the equinoctial. And yf it so be that thylke degree be nozthwarde fro the equinoctiall, than is his declinacion Nozth, and if it be southward, thā it is south

¶ To knowe for what latitude in any region the almicanteras in my tables ben compowned.

SEtten how many degrees of almicanteras in the meridionall line, be from the cercle equinoctial, vnto the signet oz els from the pole artike vnto the Nozth ozizont, and for so great a latitude oz so smale a latitude, is the table compouned.

To

¶ To knowe the latitude of the Sonne, in the myddes of the day, that is cleped the altitude meridian.

SEt the degree of thy Sonne vpon the lyne meridionall, and reke how many degrees of almicanteras ben bytwixe thin East orizonte, and the degree of thy Sonne, and take there thin altitude meridian, that is to sain, the highest degree of of the Sonne, as for that daye. So mayst thou knowe in ẏ same line the highest lyne that any starre fyre clymbeth by nyght, this is to saine, that whan any starre fyre is passed the lyne meridional, thā beginneth it to discende, and so doth the Sonne.

¶ To knowe the degree of the Sonne, by the reet for a maner corpsyte

SEke busely with thy rule the highest of the Sonne in myddes of the daye, tourne than thyn Astrolabye, & with a pricke of lyke marke the nombre of ẏ same altitude, in the lyne meridional. Tourne thā thy reet aboute tyl thou finde a degree of thy zodiake, accordyng with the pricke, this is to sain, sitting on the pricke, and in sothe thou shalt finde but two degrees in al the zodiake of that condicion. And yet thilke two degrees ben in diuers sygnes. Thā mayst thou lightly by the season of the yere, knowe the signe in whiche is the Sonne.

¶ To knowe whiche day is like to other in lengthy throughout the yere.

LOke whiche degrees ben lyke from the heedes of Cancer and Capricorne, and loke whan the Sonne is in any of thilke degrees, than been the dayes lyke of length, that is to sain, that as longe is that day in that moneth, as was loche a daye in loche amoneth, there varieth but lytell. Also if thou take two dayes naturelles in the yere, ylike farre frō eyther points of the equinoctial, in the oppolite parties, thā as long is the daye artificial on that one day as on that other, and eke the contrarie.

¶ This chapiter is a maner declaracion to conclusions that foloweth.

VNderstande well, that thy zodiake is departed into halfe cercles, frome the heed of Capricorne vnto the heed of Cancer, & ayēwarde from the head of Cācer vnto ẏ head of Capricorne. The head of Capricorn is ẏ lowest point, wher as the sōne goth in winter, & the head of Cācer is the highest point, in which the sonne goth in sōmer. And therefore vnderstande wel, than any two degrees that ben ylyke far frō any of these two heades, trust wel that thilke two degrees ben lyke declinacion, be it Southward or Northwarde, & the dayes of hem ben lyke of length, and the nyghtes also, and shadowes ylyke & the altitudes ylyke at mydday for euer.

¶ To knowe the very degree of any maner starre straunge after his latitude, though he be indetermitate in thyn Astrolaby, sothly to the trouth thus he shal be knowen.

TAke the altitude of thy starre, whan he is on the East side of the lyne meridional, as nyght as thou maylte gesse, and take that ascendent anone right by some maner starre fyre, which thou knowest and forget not the altitude of the first starre ne thin ascendent. And whan that this is done, aspie dyligently whan this same first starre passeth any thig to the south westward, and catche him anone right in the same nombre of the altitude on the west syde of this lyne meridional, as he was caught on the East syde, and take a newe ascendent anone right by some maner fyre, the whiche that thou knowest, & forgete not this seconde ascendent. And whan this is done, reken thā howe many degrees been bytwirt the first ascendent, and the seconde ascendent, and reken wel the middel degree bytwyxt bothe ascendentes, & set thilke myddel degree vpon thin Easte orizonte, and than loke what degre sit vpon the line meridional, and take there the very degree of the ecliptike, in whiche the starre standeth for the tyme. For in the ecliptyke is the longitude of a celestial body, rekened euen fro the halfe of the head of Aries, vn to the ende of Pisces, and his latitude is rekened after the quantite of hys declynacion Northe or South, towarde the poles of thys werke. As thus, if it be of the sonne or any fix starre, reken his latitude or his declinacion fro the equinoctial cercle, and if it be of a planete, reken than the quantite of his latitude

frō the ecliptike line, al be it so that from the equinoctial, may the declinacion or the latitude of any body celestiall be rekened, after the sight Northe or Southe, and after the quantite of his declinacion. And yet so may the latitude or the declinacion of anye body celestiall, saue onelye of the Sonne, after his sight Northe or Southe. And after the quantite of his declinacion be rekened from the ecliptike line, fro whiche lyne all planettes somtime decline, Northy or Southe, saue onely the forsaide Sonne.

¶ To know the degrees of longitudes of fyxe sterres, after that they ben determinate in thin astrolabye, if it so be that they ben trewly set.

SEtte the center of the sterre vpon the lyne meridional, and take kepe of thy zodiake, and loke what degree of anye signe sitte vpon the same lyne meridional at the same tyme, and there the degre in whiche the sterre standeth, and with the same degree cometh the same sterre vnto the same line frō the orizonte.

¶ To know in special the latitude of our centre, I meane after the altitude of Orenforde, and the hight of our people.

VNderstande wel that as farre is the heed of Aries or Libra in the quinoctial, from our orizonte, as is the synet from the pole artike, & as hie as the pole artike from the orizonte, as the equinoctial is ferre from the synet, I preue it thus by the latitude of Orenforde, vnderstande wel that the height of our pole artike from our Northy orizont is. 51. degrees, and. 50. minutes, than is the sinet from the pole artike. 38. degrees and. 10. minutes, than is the equinoctial from our sinet. 51. degrees, and. 50. minutes, than is our southe orizonte from our equinoctial. 38. degrees, and 10. minutes. Understande well this rekening also, forget not that the sinet is. 90. degrees of height from the orizont, and our equinoctial is. 90. degrees from our pole artike. Also this shorte rul is soth that the latitude of any planet in a region, is the distāce from the sinet vnto the equinoctial

¶ To proue the latitude of any place in a region by the prefte of the height of the pole artike in that same place.

IN some winters nyght, whan the fyrmamente is clere and thicke sterred, waite a time tyll that euery ster fix sit line rizt perpendiculer ouer the pole artike, and clepe that ster. A. and wayte another ster that sit lyne right vnder A. and vnder the pole, and clepe that sterre. F. & vnderstand wel that. F. is not considred but onely to declare that. A. that syt euer on the pole. Take than anone right the altitude of A. from the orizonte and forget it not, let. A. and. F, go farwel tyl againste the dawning a great while, and come than again, and abide tyll that. A. is euen vnder the pole vnder. F. for sothely than wil. F. sit ouer the pole, take than eftsones the altitute of. A. from the orizonte, and note as wel the seconde altitude as the firste altitude. And whan that thys is done, reken howe many degrees that the first altitude. A. exceded his altitude, & take halfe the ilke porcion that is exceded, and adde it to his secōde altitude, and take there the eleuacion of the pole, and eke the altitude of thy region. For these two ben of one nombre, that is to sain, as many degrees as thy pole is eleuat, so moche is the latitude of thy region. Ensample as thus. Parauēture the altitude of. A. in the eueninge is, 92. degrees of height than wil the secōde altitude or the dawning be. 21. that is to saine, lesse than. 92. that was his first altitude at euen. Take thā the halfe of. 92. & adde to it. 21. that was his seconde altytude, and thā hast thou ỹ height of the pole & the latitude of thy region. But vnderstande wel to preue this conclusion, & many another faire conclusion, thou maiste haue a plomet hanginge on a lyne hygher than thy head on a perche and that lyne mote hange euen perpendiculer bytwixe the pol and thine eye, and than shalte thou se yt. A. syt euen ouer the pole and ouer. F. at euen. And also if. F. syt euen ouer the pole and ouer. A or daye.

¶ Another conclusion to preue the hyght of the pole artike from the orizont.

TAke any sterre fyxe that euer descendeth vnder the orizont in thilk region, and conspde his hygheft altitude and his loweft altitude from the orizōt, and make a nomber of these altitudes, take than and abate halfe that nombre, and take there the eleuacion of the pole artike in that same region, and for the more declaracion. &c.

o 82. 51. o. 20.

¶ Another conclusion to preue the latitude of a region that ye ben in.

Vnderstande well that the latytude of anye place in a rigyon, is verely the space betwyxe the lygne of hem that dwellen there, & the equinoctial cercle, Nozth oz Southe, takinge the measure in the merydyonall line, as shewety in the almicanteras of thin astrolaby, and thilke space is as moch as the pole artike is hie in the same place frō the ozizont. And than is the depressyon of the pole artentike beneth the ozizonte, the same quantite of space, neither moze ne lesse, than if thou desire to knowe this latitude of the region, take the altitude of the Sonne in the myddle of the daye, whan the Sonne is the heed of Aries oz of Libza, foz than mouethe the Sōne in the lyne equinoctial, and abate the nombze of that same Sōnes altitude out of .90. degrees, and than is the remnaunt of the nombze that leueth, the altitude of the region, as thus. I suppose that the Sonne is thilke daye at noone. 38. degrees of heyght, abate than .38. degrees out of .90. so leueth ther 52. than is. 52. degrees the latitude, I saye not this but foz ensample, foz wel I wote the latitude of Orenfozde is certain minutes lesse. Nowe if it so be that thee thinketh to longe a tariyng to abyde til that the Sōne be in the head of Aries oz of Libza, than waite whan that the Sonne is in anye other degre of the zodiake, and consider the degre of this declynacion be Nozthward from the equinoctial, abate than from the sōnes altytude at noon the nombze of his declinacion, and than hast thou the highest of the heedes of Aries and Libza, as thus. My Sōne parauenture is in the. 10. degre of Leo almoste. 56. of height at noone, & his declinacion is almost .18. degrees nozthward from the equinoctial, abate than thilke .18. degrees of declinacion out of the altitude at noone, than leueth. 38. degrees, lo there the heed of Aries oz Libza, and thin equinoctial in that regiō. Also if it so be that the Sonnes declinaciō be southwarde from the equinoctial, adde thā thilke declinacion to the altitude of the Sonne at noon, & take there the heedes of Aries and Libza & thyn equinoctiall, abate than the height of the equinoctial out of .90. degrees, and thā leueth there .38. degrees, that is the distaunce of the region from the equinoctial of any sterre fixe that thou knowest, and take the neither elongation lengthing from the same equinoctial lyne, and werke after the maner a fozesaid.

¶ Declaracion of the ascencion of signes as well in the circle directe, as in oblique.

The excellence of the sphere solide amōges other noble conclusions, shewety manifest the diuers ascensions of signes in diuers places, as wel in rizt cercles as in embolyke cercle. These auctours writen y thilke signe is cleped of right ascencion with which the moze part of the cercle equinoctial and the lesse parte of the zodiake ascendeth, & thilke signe ascendeth embolyke, with, which the lesse of the zodiake equinoctial, and the moze parte of the zodiake ascendethe, and euer mo the arche of the daye and the arche of the night is there ylike longe, and the soone twise euery yere passing thzough the signet of her heed and, 2. sōmers & 2. winters in a yere haue these fozsaide people, and the almycanteras in her Astrolabie ben streight as a line, so hathe shewed in this fygure. The vtilities to knowe the ascencions of signes in the right circle is this. Trust wel that be mediacyons of thilke ascencions, these Astrologies by her table and her instrumentes, knowen verely the ascencion of euery degre and minute in al the zodiake, in the embolike cercle, as shal be shewed. And note that this fozsayd right ozizonte that is cleped ozizont rectum, deuideth the equinoctiall in to right angles, and embolike ozizonte, where as the people is enhaunced vpon the ozizonte, ouercomethe the equinoctial embolyke angels.

¶ This is the conclusion to know the ascencions of signes in the right cercle, that is circulus directus.

Sette the heed of what signe the lyst to knowe the ascending on the right cercle, vpon the lyne meridionall, and wayte were thin almurie touchethe the bozdure, and set there a pziche, tourne than thy rete westwarde til the ende of the fozsaid signe, sette vpon the meridional lyne, and eftsones waite where thine almurie thoucheth the bozdure, and set there another pziche. Reken than the nombzes of degrees in the bozdure betwixe both pziches, and take than the ascencion of the signe in the right cercle, and thus maist thou werke with euery pozcion of the zodiake.

¶ To knowe the ascencyons of signes in the embolyke cercle in euery region, I mene in circulo obliquo

SEtte the heed of the sygnes, which as the liste to knowe his ascencion vpon the Est orizonte, and wayte where thine almury toucheth the bordure, and sette there a pricke, tourne than thy rete vpwarde til the ende of the same sygne, set vpon the Est orizonte and waite eft sones where as thine almurie toucheth the bordure, and set there another prycke, reken thā the nombre of the degrees in the bordure betwixe bothe prickes, and take there the ascencion of the signe in the embolyke cercle.
And vnderstand wel that al the signes in the zodiake, from the heed of Aries vnto the ende of Virgo, ben cleped signes of the Northe frō the equinoctial, and these signes arisen betwixe the very Est & the verye Northe in our orizont generally for euer: and all the signes from the heed of Libra, vnto the ende of Pisses, ben cleped signes of the southe fro the equinoctial, and these sinnes arisen euermore betwixe the very Est and the very southe in our orizonte, also euery signe betwixthe heed of Capricorne vnto the ende of Gemini, ariseth in our orizonte in lesse than two houres equalles, & these same signes from the heed of Copricorne vnto the ende of Geminy, ben called torteuous signes or croked signes, for they risen embolike in our orizonte, and these croked signes ben obediēt toy signes thatbē of the right ascencion. These signes of right ascencion, ben fro the heed of Cancer vnto the heed of sagitary, and these signes arisen more bright than dothe the other, and therfore they ben called soueraine signes, and euerye of hem ariteth in more space than in two houres, of whiche sygnes Gemini obeyeth to Cancer, and Taurus to Leo, and Aries to Virgo, Pisces to Libra, Aquarius, to Scorpio, and Capricorne, to Sagitarie, and thus euermore two signes that ben like ferre from the heed of Capricorne, obeyeth eueriche of hem to other.

¶ To knowe iustly the foure quarters of the worlde, as Est, west, South, and North.

TAke the altitude of thy sonne whā thou liste, and note well the quarter of the worlde in with the sonne is from the tyme by the alymutes, tourne than thin Astrolaby, and set the degree of the sonne in the almicanteras of his altytude, on thilke syde that the Sonne standeth, as is in maner of taking of houres, and ley thy label on the degree of the Sonne, and reken howe many degrees of the Sonne, ben bytwene the lyne meridionall and the point of thy label, & note wel the nombres. Tourne than agayne thyne Astrolabye, and set the point of thy great rule there thou takest thin altitudes, vpon as many degrees in hys bordure from his meridional, as was the pointe of thy label from the lyne meridional, on the wombe syde. Take than thyne Astrolabye with both handes sadly and slyly, and let the sonne shine through bothe holes of thy rule, and slyly in thilke shynyng laye thyne Astrolabye couche a doun euen vpon a playne grounde, and than wyl the meridionall lyne of thin Astrolabye be euē south, and the Est lyne wil lye euē Est, and the West lyne West, and the Northe lyne Northe, so that thou werke softely and auisely in the couchynge, and thou haste thus the foure quaters of the firmament, &c.

¶ To knowe the altitude of planettes from ȳ way of the sonne, whether they ben Northe or southe fro the way aforesayde.

THe whan a planette is on the line meridional, yf that her altitude be of the same heighte, that is the degree of the Sōne for that daye, and than is the planette in the very way of the sonne, and hath no latitude. And yf the altitude of the planette be hyer than the degree of the Sonne, than is the planette Northe from the waye of the sygne Southe, a quantite of latitude as shewethe by thine Almycanteras and yf the altitude be lesse than the degree of the Sonne, than is the planette South from the waye of the Sonne, soche a quantite of latitude as sheweth by thine Almicanteras. This is to saine fron the waye of the Sonne in euerye place of the zodiake, for on the morowe the Sonne wyll be in another degre.

¶ For to knowe the signet for the arising of the Sonne, this is to saine, ȳ party of the orizonte in whiche the Sonne ariseth.

Thou

THou muste firste consider that the Soonne ariseth not in the verie Easte signet, sometyme by Nozth Easte, and sometyme by Southe Easte, sothely the Sonne ariseth euermoze in the verie Easte in our Oꝛizonte, but if he bee in the hedde of Aries oꝛ Libza. Now is thine Oꝛizonte departed into. xxiiii. parties, of thy Minutes in significacion, of xxiiii. partes of the woꝛlde, though it bee so, that shipmen reken all that parties in. xxxii. Then is there no moze, but waite in the whiche minute, that the Sonne entreth at his aꝛising, and take there the signet of the aꝛising of the Sonne.

¶ The maner of deuision of thine Astrolabie, is thus enioined, as in this case.

FIrst, it is deuided in fower places principallie, with the line that cometh fro the East, to the weste, and then with an other line, that goeth fro the South to the Nozth, then is it diuided in smal parties of minutes, as East and East by Southe, where that is the firste minute aboue the East line, and so foꝛthe fro partie to partie, till that thou come again to the Easte line. Thus thou might vnderstand the signet of euery sterre, in whiche partie he ariseth.

¶ To knowe in whiche partie of the firmament, is the cõiunccion.

COnsider the tyme of the coniunccion, by the Kalender, as thus: howe many houres that the coniunccion is fro middaie of the daie befoꝛe, as sheweth the Canon of the Kalender. Reken then that nomber in the boꝛdure of thine Astrolabie, as thou were wont to doe in knowyng of the houres of ẏ daie, oꝛ of the night, and lay thy labell ouer the degree of the sõne, then will the poinct of the labell, sit vpon the houre of the coniunccion. Loke then in whiche Minute, the degree of the Sonne sitteth, and in that partie of the Firmamente is the coniunccion.

¶ To knowe the signet of the altitude of the Sonne.

THis is no moze to saie, but any time of the daie, take the altitude of the sunne and by the Minutes in whiche he ascendeth, thou might see in whiche partie of the Firmamente he is, and in the same wise might thou see by night any Sterre, whether he sit Easte, weste, oꝛ Southe, oꝛ any part betwixe, after the name of the minutes, in whiche the Sterres standeth.

¶ To knowe sothlie the longitude of the Moone, oꝛ any Planette that hath no Latitude, fro the tyme of the Ecliptike line.

TAke the altitude of the Moone and reken thyne altitude by, emong thyne almicanteras, on whiche side that the Moone standeth, and set there a pricke. Take then anone right vppon the Moones side, the altitude of euery sterre fire that thou knowest, and set his cercle vpõ his altitude, emong thyne almicãteras, there the Sterre is founden, waite then of whiche degree the Zodiake is, to whiche the pricke of the altitude of the Moone, and there take the degree in whiche the Moone standeth. This conclusion is verie sothe, of the Starres in thine Astrolabie, standeth after the trouth. Some treatise of the Astrolabie, maketh non excepcion, whether the Moone haue latitude oꝛ none, noꝛ whether side of the Moone, the altitude of the Sterre be founde. And note if the Moone shewe her self by daie, then thou maieste wooꝛche the same conclusion by the Sonne, as well as by the Sterre fire.

¶ This is the werching of the conclusions to knowe whether any Planette bee directe, oꝛ retrograde.

TAke the altitude of any sterre, that is cleped a Planette, and note it well, anone righte take the altitude of some Sterre fire, that thou knowest, and note it well also, and come againe the thirde oꝛ the fowerth night next folowyng, foꝛ then thou shalt perceiue well the meuyng of the Planet whether he meue foꝛward, oꝛ bakward, and waite well then when the Sterre fire, is in this same altitude that she was, when thou tooke her firste altitude, of the foꝛesaied Planet, and note it well, foꝛ truste well, if so bee that the Planet be in the right side of the meridionall line, so that his seconde altitude be lesse then the firste altitude was, then is the Planet directe, and if he be in the west side in

that condicion, then is he retrograde, and if so be that this Planet be in the East side, whē his altitude is take, so that the seconde altitude, bee more then his firste altitude, then is he retrograde, and if he bee in the west side of the line meridionall, then is he direct, but the cōtrary mouing of these parties, is the cours of the Moone, for sothlie the Moone moueth the cōtrary fro either Planettes, in her ecliptike line, but in none other maner.

¶ The conclusion of equacions of houses, after the Astrolabie.

SEt the beginning of the degree that ascendeth vpon the ende of the. viii. houre inequall, thā will the line of ỹ second house, sit vpon the line of Midnight, remeue then the degree that ascendeth, and set hym vpon the ende of the. x. houre inequall, then will the beginnyng of the. iii. houle, sitte vpon the Midnight line, bring vp again the same degree that ascēdeth firste, and set hym vpon the Easte Orizonte, and then will the beginning of the. iiii. hous sit vppon the Midnight line. Take then the nadere of the degree, that ascendeth firste, and set hym vpon the ende of the. ii. houre inequall, and then will the beginnyng of the. v houle, sit vpon the Midnight line. Take then the nadere of the ascendent, and set him vpon the ende of the. iiii. houre inequall, and then will the beginnyng of the. vi. houle set vpon the Midnight line. The beginnyng of the seuenth houle, is nadere of the ascendente, and the beginnyng of the. viii. houle, is nadere of the seconde, and the beginnyng of the nineth houle, is nadere of the thirde, and the beginnyng of the tenth houle, is nadere of the. iiii. and the beginnyng of the leuenth houle, is nadere of the fiueth, and the beginning of the xii. houle, is nadere of the. vi. houle.

¶ An other maner of equacions of houses, by the Astrolabie.

TAke thyne ascendente, and then thou hafte the lower angles, for well thou woteste, that thoppolite is of thine ascendente, that is to saie, the beginnyng of the seuenth hous, sit vpon the west Orizont, and the beginnyng of the tenthe houle, vpon the line Meridionall, and his oppolite vpon the line of Midnight, then laie thy labell vppon the degree that ascendeth, and reken then fro the poinct of thy labell, all the degrees in the bordure, till that thou come to the Meridionall line, and departe all thilke degrees into thre euen partes, and take there the euen portions of three other houles, for to laie thy labell ouer euery of these three parties, and then thou might see by the labell in the Zodiake, the beginning of these three houles fro the ascendent, that is to saie, the twelue next aboue the ascendente, and then the eleuenth houle and the. x. houle, vpon the Meridional line, as I first saied the same wise werche, fro the ascendent, doune to the line of Midnight and thus thou hafte three houles, that is to saie, the beginning of the seconde, the thirde, and the fowerth houle: then is the nadire of these three houles, the beginnyng of these. iii houles that folowety.

¶ To finde the line Meridionall, to dwell fixe in any certain place.

TAke a rounde plate of metall, for warpyng the border the better, and make thereupon a iuste compace, a little within the bordure, and laie this rounde plate vpon an euen grounde, or some euen stone, or on a euen stocke fixe in the ground, and laie it euē by a rule, in the centre of the compace, sticke an euen pinne or a wire vpright, the smaller the better, and set thy pinne or thy wire, by a plomme rules ende vpright euen, and let this pinne be no lenger then a quarter, of thy diameter of the compace fro the pinne, and wait busilie aboute tenne or eleuen of the Clocke, when the Sonne sheweth, when the shadow of the pinne entereth any thyng, within the cercle of the cōpace one heere brede, and make there a pricke with ynke: abide then still waityng on the Sonne, after one of the clocke, til that the shadowe of the pinne, or of the wire, passe any thyng out of the cercle or compace, bee it neuer so little, and sette there a pricke. Take then a compace and measure euen the middle, betwixt bothe prickes, and set there a pricke: Take then a Rule and drawe a strike, euen fro the pinne vnto the middle prick, and take there the line Meridional for euermore, as in the same place. And if thou draw a crosse ouerthwarte the compace, iustly ouer the line Meridionall, then hafte thou East and west, and perconsequens the oppolitike, that is Southe and Norths.

¶ Discripcion of the Meridionall line, and of the longitudes and latitudes, of citees and tounes, as well as of climates.

This

This line Meridionall, is but a maner discripcion of a line ymagined, that passeth vpō the poles of the worlde, and by the signette of our hedde: and it is cleaped the signet, for in what place that any manne, is at any tyme of the yere, when the Sonne by meuyng of the Firmamente, cometh to his Meridionall place, then is it the verie Middaie, that wee cleape Noone, and therefore it is cleaped the line of Middaie. Then take heede that euermore of twoo Citees, or of twoo Tounes, of whiche the one approcheth nerer the East, then doeth the other Toune, trust well that thilke twoo Tounes haue diuers Meridians. Take kepe also, that the arche of the Equinocciall, that is conteined and bounded, betweene the twoo Meridians, is cleaped the Longitude of the Toune. And if so be that twoo Tounes haue Meridian like, or one Meridian, then is the distaunce of hym bothe like farre: and in this maner thei chaunge not her Meridian, but sothelie thei chaunge her Almicanteras, for the haunsyng of the Pole, and the distaūce of the Sonne. The longitude of a climate maie be cleaped the space of the yearth, fro the beginnyng of the firste climate, vnto the laste ende of the same climate, euen directe against the Pole artike, thus saie some auctours.

And some clerkes saie, that if men cleape the latitude of a center, the arche Meridian, that is conteined or intercepte, betwixe the signet and the Equinocciall, then thei saie, that the distaunce fro the Equinocciall, vnto the ende of the climate, euen ayenst the pole artike, is the longitude of the climate for Southe.

¶ To knowe with what degree of the Zodiake, that any planet ascendeth on the Orizonte, where his latitude be Northe, or South

Knowe by thyne Alminacke, the degree of the Ecliptike of any signe, in which that the planette is reckened for to bee, and that is cleped the degree of his lōgitude. And know also the degree of his latitude, fro the ecliptike, Northe or South, and by these ensamples folowing in especialle, thou maiest worche with euery signe of the Zodiake. The longitude perauenture of Venus, or of an other planet was of Capricorne, and the latitude of hem Northward degrees, fro the Ecliptike line, then tooke I subtil compas, and cleped the one poinct of my compace A, & that other F. then tooke I the poinct of A. and set it in the ecliptike line, and my zodiake in the degree of the Longitute of heddes, that is to saie, in the ende of Capricorne, and then set I the poinct of F. vpward in the same signe, bicause that the altitude was North, vpon the latitude of Venus, that is to saie, in the degre fro the hed of Capricorn, and thus haue I the degrees betwixe my twoo priches, then laid I doune softlie my compace, and set the degree of the longitude vpon the Orizont, then toke I and waxed my label, in maner of a paire of tables, to receiue distinctly the pricke of my compace, then toke I this forsaid labell, and laied it fire ouer the degree of my longitude, then toke I vp my compace, and the poinct of A. in the ware of my labell, as I coud gesse, ouer the ecliptike line, in thende of the lōgitude I set the poinct ouer endlong on the labell, vpon the space of the latitude inwarde, and on the zodiake, that is to say, Northward fro the ecliptike: then laied I doun my compace, and loked well in the waie vpon the ecliptike of A. and F. then tourned I my reete, till that the pricke of F. sate vpon the Orizont, then sawe I well, that ỹ bodie of Venus in her latitude of degrees septemtrionals, ascendeth in the ende of degree, fro the hed of Capricorne. And note that in this maner, thou mightest worch with any latitude septētrionall in al signes: but sothly the latitude Meridionall, of a planet in Capricorn maie not be take, bicause of the little space betwixe the ecliptike, and the bordure of the Astrolabie, & liberly in al other signes it maie bee take. Also the degree perauenture of Jupiter, or of any other planette, was in the first degree of Pisces in longitude and his latitude was degrees Meridionall. Then toke I the poinct of A. and set it in the first degree of Pisces on the ecliptike, then set I the poinct dounward of F. in the same signe, bicause that ỹ latitude was South degrees that is to saie, fro the hed of Pisces, and thus haue I degrees bitwixe both prickes. Then set I the degree of the longitude, vpon the Orizont, then toke I my labell, & laied him fire vpon the degree of longitude, then sette I the poinct of A. on my labell euen ouer the ecliptike line, in the ende of the degree of the lōgitude, and I sette the poincte of F. endelong on my labell, the space of degrees of the latitude outwarde fro the Zodiake, that is to saie, Southwarde fro the Ecliptike towarde the bordure, and then tourned I my reete, til the poincte of F. sate vpon the Orizont, then

sawe

salwe I weil that the bodie of Jupiter, in his Latitude of degrees Meridionall, ascendeth with the degree of Pisces in horescopo. And in this maner thou maiesse werche, with any Latitude, as I saied first, saue in Capricorne. And thou wilte plie this crafte, with the arising of the Moone, looke thou reben well the course of houre by houre, for she dwelleth in a degree of her Longitude but a little while, as thou woste well: but neuertheless, if thou legen well her verie meuyng by the tables, or after her course houre by houre, thou shalte doe well inough.

Cumbia recta.

If thou wilt wirche with Cumbia recta, if thou nught come to the base of the toure, in this maner shalt thou wirche: take the altitude of the Toure with both the holes, so that the rule lie euen on a poincte. Ensample, as thus. I see hym through the poincte of lower, then mete I the space, betwixe me and the Toure, and I find it twentie fote, then beholde I how lower is to twelue, and I find it is the third part of twelue. Right so the space betwixe thee and the Toure, is the thirde parte of the altitude of the Toure: then thrise twentie foote, is the highest of the toure, with thaddicion of thine owne bodie fro thyne ye. If the Rule fall on fiue, then is fiue tymes twelue, the highest of the Toure.

Cumbia versa.

If thou maiesse not come to the base of the toure, and thou fire hym through the nōber of one, set there a prick at thy foote, then go nere the Toure, and see hym through at the poincte of twoo, and set there an other pricke, and then beholde howe one hath hym to twelue, and thou shalte finde that he hath hym twelue sithes, then beholde how twoo haue hym to. xii. and thou shalte finde it fire sithes, and therefore the space betwixe twoo prickes, is fire times thyne altitude. And note that at the first altitude of one, thou settest a prick, and afterward when thou seest hym through at twoo, there thou settest a pricke, then thou findeste betwene. lxxx. foote, then thou shalte finde that tenne is the sixte parte of. lxxx. then is a foote the altitude of the Toure, but if it fall vpon an other poincte, as thus. It falleth on fire at the seconde tahyng it, when it falleth on lower, then shalt thou find that fire is the second part of twelue, and lower is the third parte of twelue, by the thirde parte, that is to say, the space betwixe twoo prickes, twise the height of the Toure, and if the difference wer three, then would it be thre times the height. Et sic de singulis. An other maner werchyng by Cumbia recta. If thou maiest not come by the base of the Toure, wirche in this wise: Sette thy rule vpon one, till thou see the altitude, and set at thy foote a pricke, and then set thy rule vpon twoo, and so dooe in thesame maner: then looke what is the difference betwixe one and twoo, and thou shalte finde that it is one. Then measure the space betwixe the two prickes, and that is the twelue part of the altitude of the Toure, and so of all other.

Cumbia recta.

If thy Rule fall vpon the eighte poinct, on the right shadowe, then make the figure of eight, thā loke howe moche space of the feete is, betwixe thee and the Toure, and multiplie that by twelue, and when thou haste multiplied it by thesame nombet, then deuide it by the nomber of eight, and kepe the residue, and adde thereto thy height vnto thyne ye, to the residue, and that shall be the verie heighte of the Toure. And thus maiesse thou woorche on thesame side, from one to twelue, &c.

Cumbia recta.

Another maner of woorkyng vpon thesame side. Looke vpon what poincte thy rule falleth, whē thou seest the toppe of the Toure, through the twoo holes, and then mete the space frō thy foote, to the base of the Toure, and right as the nombet of the poincte, hath hymself to twelue, right so the mesure, betwixt thee and the Toure, hath hym self to the height of the same Toure. Ensample as thus. I sette case thy rule fall vpon eight, then is eight twoo thirde partes of twelue, so is the space twoo thirde partes of the Toure.

Cumbia versa.

Lo knowe the height, by the poincte of Cumbia versa. If the rule fall vpon. iii when thou seest the toppe of the toure

set

sette a prieke there thy foote standeth, and go nere till thou maiest see the same toppe, at the poincte of.iiii. and sette there an other prick: then mete howe many foote is betwixe the twoo prickes, and the height vp to thyne ye, and that shall be the height of the toure. And note, that.iii. is the fowerth part of.xii. and iiii. is the thirde part of.xii. Now passeth.iiii. the nomber of.iii. by distaunce of.i. therefore the same space with thy height to thy ye, is the height of the toure. And if it were so that there were twoo or three distaunces in the nõbers, so should the measure betwixe the prickes, by twise or thrise the height of the toure.

Umbra recta.

TO know the height, if thou maiest not come of the face of ỹ thing, set thy rule vpon what poinct thou wilte, so that thou maist se the toppe of the thing, through the twoo holes, and make a marke, there as thy foote standeth, and go nere or ferther, till thou maieste see it through an other poinct, and make there an other marke, and looke what difference is betwixe the twoo poinctes in the scale, and right as that difference hath hym to. xii. right so the spaces betwixe the twoo markes, hath hym to the height of the thing. Enlãple. I set the case, that thou seest it through the poinct of.iiii. and after at the poinct of.iii. Now passeth the nomber of.iiii. the nomber of.iii. the distance of. i. and right as this difference of one, hath hymself to. xii. right so the measure betwixe bothe the markes, hath him to the height of the same thing puttyng therto the height of thy self to thine ye. And thus maiest thou werke frõ. i. to. xii.

Umbra versa.

FErthermore, if thou wilte knowe in Umbra versa, by the crafte of Umbra recta, I suppose to take thine altitude at the poinct of.iiii. and makest a marke, and then thou goest nere, till thou haste it at the poincte of.iii. & makest there an other marke, then must thou deuide.144. by.4. the nomber that cometh thereof shall be.36. and after deuide.144. by.3. and the nomber that cometh thereof is.48. then loke what difference is betwixe.36. and.48. and that shalt thou finde.12. and right as.12. hath hym to.12. so the space betwixe the twoo prickes, hath him to the altitude of the thyng.

Here endeth the conclusions of the Astrolabie.

The complaint

of the blacke Knight.

IN Maie when Flora the fresshe lustie Quene
The soile hath cladde, in grene, red, and whight
And Phebus gan to shede his stremes shene
Amidde the Bulle, with the beames bright
And Lucifer, to chace awaie the night
Ayen the morowe our Orizont hath take
To bid all louers out of her slepe awake.

And hartes heuie for to recomforte
From drerihed, of heuie nightes sorowe
Nature bad hem rise, and hem disporte
Ayen the goodlie glad greie morowe
And hope also, with sainct Jhon to borowe
Bad in dispite of Daunger and Dispaire
For to take the holsome lustie aire.

And with a sigh I gan for to abreide
Out of my slomber, and sodainly vp starte
As he (alas) that nigh for sorowe deide
My sickenesse sate aye so nie my harte
But for to finde soccour of my smarte
Or at the least some releale of my peine
That me so sore halte in euery veine.

I rose anone, and thought I would gone
Into the wodde, to heare the birdes syng
When that the milkie vapour was agone
And cleare and faire was the morenyng
The dewe also like siluer in shinyng
Upon the leaues, as any Baume swete
Till kirie Titan with his persaunt hete.

Had dried vp the lustie licour newe
Upon the herbes in the grene mede
And that the floures of many diuers hewe
Upon her stalkes gon for to spredе
And for to splaie out her leues in brede
Again the Sonne, golde burned in his spere
That doune to hem cast his beames clere.

And by a riuer forthe I gan costeie
Of water clere, as birell or cristall
Till at the last I founde a little weie
Toward a parke, enclosed with a wall
In compace rounde, and by a gate small
Who so that would, frelie might gone
Into this parke, walled with grene stone.

And

Of the blacke knight.

And in I went to heare the birdes song
Which on the braunches, both in plain & vale
So loude sang, that all the woode rong
Like as it should shiuer in peces smale
And as me thought, that the Nightingale
With so great might, her voice gan out wrest
Right as her harte for loue would brest.

The soile was plain, smoth, & wonder soft
All ouerspradd with tapettes that Nature
Had made her self: couered ehe a loft
With bowes grene, the floures for to cure
That in her beautie thei maie long endure
From all assaute of Phebus feruent fere
Whiche in his sphere so hotte shone and clere

The aire attempre, and the smothe winde
Of Zepherus, emong the blosomes white
So holsome was, and so nourishing by kinde
That smale buddes, and round blosomes lite,
In maner gan of her brethe delite.
To peue vs hope there fruict shall take
Ayenst Autumpne redy for to shake.

I sawe the Daphene closed vnder rinde
Grene Laurer, and the holsome Pine
The Mirre also, that wepeth euer of kinde
The Cedres hie, vpright as a line
The Filbert eke, that lowe doeth encline
Her bowes grene, to the yearth adoun
Unto her knight called Demophon.

There sawe I eke the freshe Hauthorne
In white Motley, that so swote doeth smell
Ashe, Firre, & Oke, with many a yong acorn
And many a tree mo then I can tell
And me before I sawe a little well
That had his course, as I can beholde
Under an hill, with quicke stremes colde.

The grauell gold, the water pure as glasse
The bankes rounde, the well enuironyng
And soft as Veluet the yong grasse
That therevpon lustelie came springyng
The sute of trees about compassyng
Her shadowe cast, closyng the well rounde
And all the herbes growyng on the grounde.

The water was so holsome, & so vertuous
Through might of herbes growyng beside
Not like the welle where as Narcisus
Slain was, through vengeaunce of Cupide
Where so couertly he did hide
The grain of death vpon eche brinke
That death mote folowe, who ẏ euer drinke

Ne like the pitte of the Pegace
Under Pernaso, where Poetes slept
Nor like the welle of pure chastite
Whiche that Diane with her nimphes kept
When she naked into the water lepte
That slowe Acteon with her handes fell
Onely for he came so nigh the well.

But this welle that I here rehearse
So holsome was, that it would alwage
Bollen hartes, and the venim peerce
Of pensifehed, withall the cruell rage
And ouer more refreshe the visage
Of hem that were in any werinesse
Of greate labour, or fallen in distresse.

And I that had through daunger & disdain
So dere a thrust, thought I would assaie
To taste a draught of this welle or twain
My bitter langour if it might alaie
And on the banke anone doune I laie
And with mine hed, vnto the welle I raught
And of the water dranke I a good draught.

Whereof me thought I was refreshed wele
Of the brennyng that sate so nigh my harte
That verely anone I gan to sele
An huge parte released of my smarte
And therewithall anone vp I starte
And thought I would walke and see more
Forthe in the parke, and in the holtes hore.

And through a launde as I yede a pace
And gan about fast to beholde
I founde anone a delectable place
That was beset with trees young and olde
Whose names here for me shall not be tolde
Amidde of whiche stoode an herber grene
That vēched was, with colours new & clene.

This herber was full of floures gende
Into the whiche, as I beholde gan
Betwixt an Hulseere and a Wood bende
As I was ware, I sawe where laie a man
In blacke, and white colour pale and wann
And wonder dedly also of his hewe
Of hurtes grene, and freshe woundes newe.

And ouermore distrained with sickneſſe
Beside all this he was full greuouslie,
For vpon hym he had an hote accesse
That daie by daie hym shooke full petouslie
So that for constrainyng of his maladie
And hartely wo, thus liyng all alone
It was a death for to heare hym grone.

Whereof

wherof astoined, my fote I gan withdrawe
Greatly wondring what it might be
That he so laye and had no felawe
Ne that I coude no wight with him se
wherof I had routhe, and eke pite
And gan anone, so softely as I coude
Amonge the bushes priuely me to shroude

If that I myght in any wise aspie
What was the cause of his deedly wo
Or why that he so petously gan crie
On his fortune, and on hys also
With al my myght I layed an eere to
Euery worde, to marke what he saide
Out of his swough amonge as he abraide

But first, if I shulde make mencion
Of his persone, and plainly him discriue
He was in sothe, without exception
To speake of manhode, one the best on liue
There may no man ayen trouth striue
For of his time, and of his age also
He proued was, there men shuld haue ado

For one the beest therto of breade and length
So wel ymade by good proporcion
If he had be in his deliuer strength
But thought and sickneste were occasyon
That he thus lay in lamentacyon
Grouste on the grounde, in place desolate
Sole by him selfe, awhaped and amate

And for me semeth that it is sitting
His wordes al to put in remembraunce
To me that heard al his complaining
And al the grounde of his woful chaunce
If there withall I maye you do plesaunce
I wol to you so as I can anone
Lyke as he saide, reherce euerichone

But who shal helpe me nowe to complaine
Or who shal nowe my stile gie or lede
O Niobe, let nowe thy teeres rayne
In to my penne, and helpe eke in nede
Thou woful Myrre ỳ felest mine hert blede
Of pitous wo, and myn hande eke quake
whan that I write, for this mannes sake

For vnto wo accordeth complaining
And doleful chere vnto heuinesse
To sorowe also, sighing and weping
And pitous mourning vnto derinesse
And who that shall write of distresse
In party nedeth to knowe felingly
Cause and roote of al sothe malady

But I alas, that am of witte but dul
And haue no knowing of sothe matere
For to discriue, and write at the ful
The woful complainte, whiche ỳ ye shal here
But euen like as dothe a shriuenere
That can no more, what that he shal write
But as his maister beside dothe endite

Right so fare I, that of no sentement
Saye right naught in conclusion
But as I herde whan I was present
This man complaine, with a pitous soun
For euen like without addicioun
Or diseuerease, eyther more of lesse
For to reherse anone I wol me dresse

And if that any nowe be in this place
That sele in loue brenninge or seruence
Or hindred were to his ladies grace
With false tonges, that with pestilence
Slea trewe men, that neuer did offence
In worde nor dede, ne in her entent
If any soche be here nowe present

Let him of routhe lay to audience
With doleful chere, and sobre countenaunce
To here this man, by ful hye sentence
Hys mortal wo, and his perturbaunce
Complaining, nowe lyng in a traunce
With lokes opcast, and ruful chere
Theffecte of whiche was as ye shal here.

The thought oppressed with ward sighs sore
The painful lyfe, the body languissing
The woful gost, the hert rent and tore
The pitous chere pale in complaining
The deedly face, like ashes in shining
The salte teares that from min eyen fall
Percel declare, grounde of my paines al

whose herte is grounde to blede in heuinesse
The thought resceite of wo, & of complainte
The brest is chest of dole and derinesse
The body eke so feble and so fainte
with hote and colde mine ares is so mainte
That nowe I chiuer, for defaute of heate
And hote as glede, nowe sodainly I sweate

Nowe hote as fire, now colde as ashes deed
Now hote for colde, now cold for hete again
Now colde as yse, now as coles reed
For heate I brenne, & thus betwixe twaine
I posted am, and al forcaste in paine
So that my hete plainly as I fele
Of greuous colde is cause euery dele

Of the blacke knight.

This is the colde of inwarde hie disdane
Colde of dispite, and colde of cruel hate
This is the colde ꝑ euer doth his bely payne
Ayenst trouthe to fight and debate
This is the colde that the fyre abate
Of trewe meaning, alas the harde while
This is the colde that wol me begile

For euer the better that in trouth I mente
With al my myght faithfully to serue
With herte and al to be diligent
The lesse thanke, alas I can deserue
Thus for my trouth daunger doth me sterue
For one that shuld my death of mercy let
Hath made dispite new his swerde to whet

Against me, and his arowes to syle
To take vengeaunce of wilful crueite
And tonges false through her sleightly wyle
Han gone a werre, that wil not stinted be
And false enuie, wrathe and enuyte
Haue conspired against al right and lawe
Of her malyce that trouth shalbe slawe

And male bouche, gan first the tale tel
To sclaunder trouth of indignacion
And false reporte so loude range the bel
That mysbyleue and false sulpection
Haue trouthe brought to his dampnacion
So that alas, wrongfully he dyeth
And falsenesse nowe his place occupieth

And entred is in to trouthes londe
And hath thereof the ful possession
O rightful god that first the trouthe fonde
Howe maie thou suffre soche oppressyon
That falsheed shulde haue iurisdiction
In trothes right to slee him gyltles
In his fraunchise he may not lyue in pees

Falsly accused, and of his goone forfuged
Without answere, while he was absent
He damned was, and may not be excused
For cruelte sate in iudgement
Of hastinesse without aduisement
And badde Disdaine do execute anone
His iudgement in presence of his fone

Attourney maye none amitted been
To excuse trouthe, ne a worde to speke
To faith or othe the iudge lyste not seen
There is no gaine, but he wil be wreke
O lorde of trouthe to the I cal and clepe
Howe may thou se thus in thy presence
Without mercy murdred innocence

Nowe god that art of trouthe soueraine
And seest how I lie for trouthe bounde
So sore knitte in loues fyrie chaine
Euē at the death through fyre with many a (woūde
That lykely are neuer for to sounde
And for my trouthe am dampned to the death
And not abyde, but drawe alonge the breath

Consider and se in thine eternal right
Howe that min herte professed whilom was
For to be trewe with al my ful myght
Onely to one the whiche nowe alas
Of volunte without any trespas
Wyne accusours hath taken vnto grace
And cherisheth hem, my death to purchace

what meaneth this? what is this wōder bre?
Of purueiaunce yf I shal it cal
Of god of loue, that false hem so assure
And trewe alas, downe of the whele ben fal
And yet in sothe, this is the worst of al
That falshed wrōgfully of troth hath ꝑ name
And trouth ayenward of falshed beareth the (blame

This blinde chaunce, this stormy auenture
In loue hath moste his experience
For who that doth with trouth most his cure
Shal for this mede finde moste offence
That serueth loue with al his diligence
For who can faine vnder lowlyhede
Ne faileth not to finde grace and spede

For I loued one, full longe sythe agone
With all mine herte, body and ful might
And to be deed my herte can not gone
From his heste but holde that he hath hyght
Though I be banished out of her syght
And by her mouthe dampned that I shal dey
Vnto my beheste, yet I wil euer obey

For euer sithe that the worlde began
Who so lyste loke, and in storye rede
He shal aye finde that the trewe man
Was put abache, were as the falshede
ꝑ furthered was for loue taketh none hede
To slea the trew, and hath of hem no charge
Where as the false gothe frely at her large

I take recorde of Palampydes
The trewe man, the noble worthy knighe
That euer loued, and of his paine no recles
Notwithstanding his manhode & his might
Loue vnto him dyd ful great vnright
For aye the bet he dyd in cheualrye
The more he was hindred by enuye

And

And aye the better he did in euery place
Through his knighthode and busy paine
The ferder was he from his ladyes grace
For to her mercy might he neuer attaine
And to his dethe he coude it not refraine
For no daungere, but aye obey and serue
As he best coude, plainly tyl he sterue

What was the fyne also of Hercules
For al his conquest and his worthinesse
That was of strength alone peerles
For lyke as bokes of him liste expresse
He set pillers through his hye prowesse
Away at Gades for to signifie
That no man might him passe in cheualrye

The whiche pillers ferre beyonde Inde
Be set of golde, for a remembraunce
And for al that was he set behinde
With hem that loue lyste feebly auaunce
For him set last vpon a daunce
Against whom helpe may no strife
For al his trouth he losse his life

Phebus also for al his pleasaunt lyght
Whan that he went here in yearth lowe
Vnto the herte with Venus sight
Y wounded was through Cupides bowe
And yet his lady lyst him not to knowe
Though for her loue his herte dyd blede
She let him go, and toke of him no hede

What shal I say of yonge Piramus?
Of trewe Tristram, for al his hye renowne
Of Achilles or of Antonius
Of Arcyte, or of him Palomowne
What was the ende of her passiowne
But after sorowe death, and than her graue
Lo here the guerdon that these louers haue

But false Jason with his doublenesse
That was vntrewe at Colkos to Medee
And Theseus rote of vnkindenesse
And with these two eke the false Enee
Lo thus the false aye in one degre
Had in loue her lust and al her wil
And saue falshode, there was none other skil

Of Thebes eke the false Arcite
And Demephon eke for his slouthe
They had her lust and al that myght delyte
For al her falshode and great vntrouthe
Thus euer loue alas, and that is routhe
His false lieges forthereth what he may
And sleeth the trewe vngoodly day by day

For trewe Adon was slayne with the bore
Amidde the forest in the grene shade
For Venus loue he felte al the sore
But Vulcanus with her no mercy made
The foule chorle had many nightes glade
Where Mars her knight and her man
To fynde mercy comforte none he can

Also the yonge freshe Ypomedes
So lustly fre as of his corage
That for to serue with al his hert he ches
Athalaus so faire of her visage
But loue alas quite him so his wage
With cruel daunger plainly at the laste
That with the death guerdonlesse he paste

Lo here the fine of loues seruice
Lo howe that loue can his seruauntes quite
Lo how he can his faithful men dispise
To slea the trewe men, and false to respite
Lo howe he doth the swerde of sorowe byte
In hertes, soche as moste his luste obey
To saue the false and do the trewe dey

For faith nor othe, worde, ne assuraunce
Trewe meaning, awaite, or busynesse
Stil porte, ne faithful attendaunce
Manhode ne might in armes worthinesse
Pursute of worship nor hie prowesse
In straunge lande riding ne trauaile
Ful lytel or nought in loue doth auaile

Peril of deathe, nor in see ne lande
Hunger ne thrust, sorowe ne sykenesse
Ne great empryses for to take on hande
Shedyng of bloode, ne mankul hardinesse
Ne ofte wounding at sautes by distresse
Nor in parting of life, nor death also
Al is for nought, loue taketh no head therto

But lesinges with her flatterie
Through her falshede, & with her doublenesse
With tales newe, and many fained lie
By false semblaunt & counterfect humblesse
Under colour depainte with stedfastnesse
With fraude couered vnder a pitous face
Accept be nowe rathest vnto grace

And can him selfe nowe best magnifie
With fained porte and presumpcion
They haunce her cause with false surquidrie
Vnder meaning of double entencion

To thinke one in her opinion
And saye another, to set hym selfe aloste
And hinder trouthe, as it is sene ful ofte

The whiche thinge, I bye nowe all to dere
Thanked be Venus, and the god Cupide
As it is sene be mine oppressed chere
And by his arowes that stycken in my side
That saue death, I nothinge abide
Fro day to day, alas the harde while
When euer his darte that him lyste to file

My woful herte for to riue a two
For faute of mercy, and lacke of pite
Of her that causeth al my paine and wo
And lyste not ones of grace for to see
Unto my trothe through her cruelte
And most of al I me complaine
That she hath ioy to laughe at my paine

And wilfully hath my death sworne
Al giltlesse, and wote no cause why
Saue for the trouthe that I had aforne
To her alone to serue faithfully
O god of loue, vnto the I crye
And to thy blynde double deite
Of this great wronge I complaine me

And vnto thy stormy wilful variaunce
Iment with chaũge and great vnstablenesse
Nowvp now doune, so rẽning is thy chaunce
That the to trust may be no sykernesse
I wite it nothinge but thy doublenesse
And who that is an archer and is blende
Marketh nothinge but shoteth by wende

And for that he hath no discrecion
Without aduise he let his arowe go
For lacke of sight, and also of reason
In his shoting it happeth oft so
To hurte his frende rather than his fo
So doeth this god with his sharpe flone
The trew fleeth, and letteth the false gone

And of his woũding this is the worst of al
Whan he hurteth doeth to so cruel wretche
And maketh the sycke for to crie and cal
Unto his foe for to be his leche
And harde it is for a man to seche
Upon the point of death in ieoperdye
Unto his foe to finde remedie.

Thus fareth it nowe euen by me
That to my foe that gaue my hert a wounde
Wote aske grace, mercy, and pite
And namely there where none may be foũde
For nowe my sore my leche wil confounde
And god of kinde so hath set mine vre
My lyues foe to haue my wounde in cure

Alas the while nowe that I was borne
Or that I euer sawe the bright sonne
For nowe I se that ful longe aforne
Or I was borne, my desteny was sponne
By Parcas sisterne to slea me yf they conne
For they my death shopen or my sherte
Onely for trouth I may it not asterte

The mighty goddesse also of Nature
That vnder god hath the gouernaunce
Of wordely thinges committed to her cure
Disposed haue through her wise purueiaũce
To giue my lady so moche suffisaunce
Of al vertues, and therwithal puruyde
To murdre trouth, hath take daũger to gide

For bounte, beaute, shape, and shemelihede
Prudence, wit, passingly fairenesse
Benigne porte, glad chere with lowlyhede
Of womanhede right plenteous largenesse
Nature dyd in her fully empresse
Whan she her wrought, & alther last disdaine
To hinder trouthe, she made her chãberlaine

Whan mistrust also, and false suspection
With misbeleue she made for to be
Chefe of counsaile to this conclusion
For to exile trouthe, and eke pite
Out of her courte to make mercy flee
So that dispite now holdeth forthe her reine
Through hasty bileue of tales that men feine

And thus I am for my trouthe, alas
Murdred & slayn, with wordes sharpe & kene
Gyltlesse god wote of al trespas
And lye and blede vpon this colde grene
Nowe mercy swete, mercy my liues quene
And to your grace of mercye yet I preye
In your seruice that your man may deye

But if so be that I shal die algate
And that I shal none other mercy haue
Yet of my death let this ben the date
That by youre wil I was brought to my
Or hastely, if that you lyste me saue (graue
My sharpe woundes that ake so and blede
Of mercy charme, and also of womanhede.

For other charme plainly is there none

But

But onely mercy to helpe in this case
For though my woundes blede euer in one
My lyfe, my death, standeth in our grace
And though my gylte be nothinge, alas
I aske mercy in all my best entente
Redy to die, yf that ye assente

For there against shal I neuer striue
In worde ne werke, plainly I ne may
For leuer I haue than to be alyue
To dyd sothly, and it be to her paye
ye though it be this same day
Or whan that euer her lyste to deuise
Sufficeth me to dye in your seruise.

And god ȳ knowest ȳ thought of euery wight
Right as it is, in euery thing thou maist se
Yet er I die, with al my ful myght
Lowly I pray to graunt vnto me
That ye goodly, faire, fresshe and fre
Whiche onely slee me for defaute of rothe
Or that I dye, ye may knowe my trouthe.

For that in sothe sufficeth me
And she it knowe in euery circumstaunce
And after I am wel paide that she
If that her lyst of death to do vengeaunce
Unto me that am vnder her lygeaunce
It site me not her dome to disobeye
But at her lustе wilfully to deye

Without grutchinge or rebellion
In wil or worde, holy I assente
Or any maner contradiction
Fully to be at her commaundement
And if I die, in my testament
My herte I sende, and my spirite also
What so euer she lyste with hem to do

And alder last to her womanhede
And to her mercy, me I recommaunde
That lye nowe her betwixe hope and drede
Abidinge plainly what she list commaunde
For vttely this nis no demaunde
Welcome to me whyle me lasteth breath
Right at her choise where it be lyfe or death

In this mater more what might I faine
Sithe in her hande, and in her wil is al
Bothe lyfe and death, my ioy and al my peine
And finally my heste holde I shall
Tyl my spirite by destenye fatal
Whan that her lyste fro my body wende
Haue here my trouth, & thus I make an ende

And with that worde he gan sighe as sore
Like as his hert ryue wolde atwaine
And helde his peace, & spake no worde more
But for to se his wo and mortal paine
The teres goone fro mine eyen raine
Ful piteously for very inwarde rothe
That I him sawe, so long wilfyng for troth

And al this while my selfe I kepte close
Amonge the bowes, and my selfe gonne hide
Tyl at the last the woful man arose
And to a lodge went there beside
Where al the May, his custome was tabyde
Sole to complaine of his paines kene
From yere to yere vnder the bowes grene

And for bycause that it drewe to the night
And that the sonne his arke diurnal
Ypassed was so that his persaunt lyght
His bright beames and his stremes al
Were in the waues of the water sal
Under the bordure of our occian
His chare of golde, his course so swiftly ran

And whyle the twilight & the rowes rede
Of Phebus light were deaurat alite
A penne I toke, and gan me fast spede
The woful plainte of this man to write
Worde by worde as he dyd endite
Like as I herde and coude him tho reporte
I haue here set, your hertes to disporde

If ought be misse, lay the wite on me
For I am worthy for to beare the blame
If any thinge mysse reported be
To make this ditte for to seme lame (same
Through myne vncōning, but for to sain the
Like as this man his complaint dyd expresse
I aske mercy and forgiuenesse

And as I wrote, me thought I sawe a ferre
Ferre in the west lustely appere
Elperus the goodly bright sterre
So glade, so faire, so persaunte ene of chere
I meane Venus with her beames clere
That heuy hertes onely to releue
Is wonte of custome for to shewe at eue

And I as fast fel adowne on my kne
And euen thus to her gan I to prey
O lady Venus so faire vpon to se
Let not this man for his trouthe deye
For that ioy thou haddest whan thou leye
With Mars thy knight, whē Vulcanus fōde
And with a chaine vnuisible you bonde

Togider bothe tway in the same whyle
That al the courte aboue celestial
At your shame gan laughe and smyle
Ey, faire lady willy londe at al
Comforte to careful, o goddes immortal
Be helping nowe, and do thy diligence
To let the stremes of thine influence

Descende downe, in forthering of the trouth
Namely of hem that lye in sorowe bounde
Shew now thy mizt & on her wo haue routh
Er falle daunger slee hem and confounde
And special let thy might be founde
For to socouer what so that thou may
The trewe man that in the herber lay

And al trewe forther for his sake
O glad sterre, o lady Venus myne
And cause his lady him to grace take
Her hert of stele to mercy so encline
Er that thy bemes go vp to declyne
And er that thou nowe go fro vs adowne
For that loue thou haddest to Adowne.

And whan she was gone to her rest
I rose anone, and home to bed wente
For wery me thought it for the best
Praieng thus in al my best entente
That al trewe, that be with daunger shente
With mercy may in release of her paine
Recured be, er Paye come eftc againe

And for that I ne may no lenger wake
Farewel ye louers al that be trewe
Prayeng to god, and thus my leue I take
That er the sonne to morowe be rysen newe
And er he haue ayen rosen hewe
That eche of you may haue soche a grace
His owne lady in armes to embrace

I meane thus, in al honeste
Without more ye may togider speake
What so ye lyst at good liberte
That eche may to other her herte breke
On Jalousies onely to be wreke
That hath so long of his malice and enuy
Werred Trouth with his tiranny.

Lenuoye.

Princesse pleaseth it to your benignite
This litel dyte to haue in minde
Of womanhede also for to se
Your man may your mercy finde
And pite eke, that longe hath be behinde
Let him againe be prouoked to grace
For by my trouthe it is against kinde
False Daungere to occupye his place

Go litel quaire vnto my lyues quene
And my very hertes soueraine
And be right glad, for she shal the sene
Soche is thy grace, but I las in paine
Am lefte behinde, & not to whom to plaine
For mercy, ruthe, grace, and eke pyte
Exiled be, that I may not attaine
Recure to finde of mine aduersite.

Explicit.

A praise of

women.

L tho the lyste of women euill to speke
And saine of hem worse than thy deserue
I praye to god that her neckes to breke
Or on some euyll deathe mote tho taglers sterue
For euery man were holden hem to serue
And do hem worship, honour an seruice
In euery maner that they best coude deuise

For we ought first to thinke on what manere
Thei bring vs forth, & what pain thei endure
First in our byrth, and sith fro yere to yere
Howe busely they done their busy cure
To kepe vs fro euery mysauenture
In our youth whan we haue no might
Our selfe to kepe, neyther by day nor night

Alas, howe may we say on hem but wele
Of whom we were fostred and yborze
And ben all our socoure, & euer trewe as stele
And for our sake ful ofte they suffre sore
Without women were al our ioye lore
Wherfore we ought al women to obey
In al goodnesse, I can no more say

This is wel knowen, and hath ben or this
That women ben cause of al lightnesse
Of knighthode, norture, eschewing al malis
Encrease of worship, and of al worthinesse
Therto curteys & meke, & grounde of ol good
Glad & mery, & trewe in euery wise (nesse
That any gentil hert can thinke or deuise

And

And though any would trust to your vntruth
And to your faire wordes would aught assent
In good faith me thinketh it wer great ruth
That other women should for her gilt be shēt
That neuer knew ne wist nought of her entent
Ne list not to heare the faire wordes ye write
Whiche ye you paine fro daie to daie tendite.

But who maie beware of your tales vntrue
That ye so busilie painte and endite
For ye will swere that ye neuer knewe
Ne sawe the woman, neither moche ne lite
Saue onely her to whom ye had delite
As for to serue of all that euer ye sey
And for her loue must ye nedes dey.

Then wil ye swere that ye knew neuer before
What loue was ne his dredfull obseruaunce
But now ye fele that he can wounde sore
Wherefore ye put you into her gouernaunce
Whō loue hath ordeined you to serue & do plesh al your mizt your little liues space (sauce
Whiche endeth sone, but if she dos you grace.

And then to bedde will he sone drawe
And sone sicke ye will you then fain
And sweare fast your Ladie hath you slawe
And brought you sodainly in so high a pain
That fro your death maie no mā you restrain
With a daungerous looke of her iyen to
That to your death must ye nedes go.

Thus will ye morne, thus will ye sigh sore
As though your hart anon in two wold brest
And swere fast that ye maie liue no more
Myne owne Ladie, that might if ye lest
Bring myne harte somdeale into rest
As if you list mercie on me to haue
Thus your vntrouthe will euer mercie craue

Thus woll ye plain, tho ye nothing smarte
These innocent creatures for to begile
And swere to hem, so wounded is your harte
For her loue, that ye maie liue no while
Scarslie so long as one might go a mile
So hieth death, to bring you to an ende
But if your souerain lady list you to amende

And if for routhe she comfort you in any wise
For pitee of your false othes sere
So that innocēt weneth ẏ it be as you deuise
And weneth your harte be as she maie here
Thus for to comfort, & somwhat do you chere
Then woll these iaunglers deme of her full ill
And saine that ye haue her fully at your will

Lo how redie her tongues been, and prest
To speake harme of women causelesse
Alas, why might ye not as well saie the best
As for to deme hem thus giltlesse
In your harte iwis there is no gentilnesse
That of your own gilt, lisse thus womē same
Now by my trouth, me thinke ye be to blame

For of women cometh this worldly wele
Wherefore we ought to worship hē euermore
And though it mishap one, we ought for to hele
For it is all through our false lore
That daie and night, we pain vs euermore
With many an othe, these women to begile
With false tales, and many a wicked wile.

And if falshede should be reckened and told
In women, iwis full trouth were
Not as in men, by a thousande fold
Fro all vices iwis thei stande cleare
In any thyng that euer I could of heare
But if entising of these men it make
That hem to flatteren connen neuer slake.

I would fain wete where euer ye coud here
Without mens tising, what womē did amis
For there ye maie get hē, ye lie fro yere to yere
And many a gabbyng ye make to hem iwis
For I could neuer heare, ne knowen er this
Where euer ye coud finde in any place
That euer women besought you of grace.

There ye you pain, with al your full might
With all your harte, and all your businesse
To plesen hem, bothe by daie and night
Praiyng hem of her grace and gentilnesse
To haue pitee vpon your greate distresse
And that thei wold on your pain haue routh
And slea you not, sens ye meane but trouth.

Thus maie ye se that thei been fautlesse
And innocent to all your werkes slie
And all your crafte that touche falsnesse
Thei knowe hem not, ne maie hem not espie
So sweare ye, that ye must nedes die
But if thei would of her womanhedde
Upon you rewe, er that ye be dedde.

And then your lady, and your harts quene
Ye call hem, and therewith ye sigh sore
And saie, my ladie I trowe that it be sene
In what plite that I haue liued full yore
But now I hope that ye woll no more
In these paines suffre me for to dwell
For of all goodnesse, iwis ye be the well.

Lo whiche a painted processe can ye make
These harmlesse creatures for to begile
And when thei slepe, ye paine you to wake
And to bethinke you on many a wicked wile
But ye shal se the daie þ ye shall curse þ while
That ye so busily did your entent
Hem to begile, that falsed neuer ment.

For this ye know wel, though I would lie
In women is all trouth and stedfastnesse
For in good faithe, I neuer of hem sie
But moche worship, bountee, and gentilnesse
Right commyng, faire, and full of meknesse
Good and glad, and lowlie I you ensure
Is this goodlie angelike creature.

And if it happe a man be in disease
She doeth her businesse, and her full paine
With al her might, him to comfort and please
If fro his disease she might hym restrain
In worde ne deede i wis she woll not faine
But with al her might, she doth her businesse
To bryng hym out of his heuinesse.

Lo what gentillesse these women haue
If we could knowe it for our rudenesse
How busie thei be vs to kepe and saue
Bothe in heale, and also in sickenesse
And alwaie right sorie for our distresse
In euery maner, thus shewe thei routhe
That in hem is all goodnesse and trouthe.

And sith we find in hem gentilnesse & trouth
Worship, bountee, and kindnesse euermore
Let neuer this gētilesse, through your slouth
In her kinde trouth be aught forlore
That in women is, and hath been full yore
For in reuerence of heauens quene
We ought to worship all women that bene.

For of all creatures that euer wer get & borne
This wote ye well, a woman was the best
By her was recouered þ blis þ we had lorne
And through þ woman shall we come to rest
And been ysaued, if that our self lest
Wherefore me thinketh, if that we had grace
We oughten honour women in euery place.

Therefore I rede, that to our liues ende
Fro this time forth, while that we haue space
That we haue trespaced, pursue to amende
Praiyng our Ladie, welle of all grace
To bryng vs vnto that blisfull place
There as he & all good women shal be in fere
In heauen aboue, emong the angels clere.

¶ Explicit.

¶ The House of Fame.

O Dtourne vs euerie dreame to good
For it is wonder thyng by the Rood
To my witte, what causeth sweuenes
On the more we or on euenes
And why the effecte foloweth of some
And of some it shall neuer come
Why that it is an auision
And why this is a reuelacion
Why this a dreame, why that a sweuen
And not to euery man liche euen
With this a fantome, why that Oracles
I not: but who so of these miracles
The causes knowe bet then I
Define he, for I certainly
He can hem not, ne neuer thinke
To busie my witte for to swinke
To knowe of her significacions
The gendres, ne distinccions
Of the tymes of hem, ne the causes
Or why this is more then that is
Or yeue folkes complexions
Make hem dreame of reflexions
Or els thus, as other saine
For the greate feblenesse of her braine
By abstinence, or by sickenesse
Prison, strief, or greate distresse
Or els by disordinaunce
Or naturall accustomaunce
That some men be to curious
In studie, or Melancolious
Or thus: so inly full of drede
That no man maie hym bote rede
Or els that deuocion
Of some, and contemplacion
Causen soche dreames ofte
Or that the cruell life vnsofte
Of hem that loues leden
Ofte hopen moche or dreden
That purely her impressions
Causen hem to haue visions
Or if spirites han the might
To make folke to dreame on nights
Or if the soule of proper kinde
Be so perfite as men finde
That it wote what is to come
And that he warneth all and some
Of euerichc of her auentures

By

By auisions,or by figures
But that our flesshe hath no might
To vnderstande it a right
For it is warned to derkely
But why the cause is,not wote I
Well worthe of this thyng clerkes
That treaten of that,and of other werkes
For I of none opinion
Nill as now make mencion
But onely that the holie Rood
Tourne vs euery dreame to good
For neuer sith I was borne
Ne no man els me beforne
Mette I trowe stedfastly
So wonderfull a dreame as I.
The tenth daie now of December
The whiche,as I can remember
I woll you tellen euery deale
But at my beginnyng trusteth weale
I woll make inuocacion
With a deuoute speciall deuocion
Unto the God of slepe anone
That dwelleth in a caue of stone
Upon a streame that cometh fro Lete
That is a flood of hell vnswete
Beside a fulbe,that men clepe Cimerie
There slepeth aye this God vnmerie
With his slepie thoulande sonnis
That alwaie to slepe her won is
And to this God that I of rede
Praie I,that he woll me spede
My sweuen for to tell a right
If euery dreame stande in his might
And he that mouer is of all
That is and was,and euer shall
So giue hem ioye that it here
Or all that thei dreame to yere
And for to stande all in grace
Of her loues,or in what place
That hem were leuest for to stonde
And shelde hem from pouertee and shonde
And from euery vnhappe and disease
And sende hem that maie hem please
That taketh well and scorneth nought
Ne it misdeme in her thought
Through malicious entencion
And who so through presumpcion
Or hate or scorne,or through enuie
Dispite or iape,or felonie
Misdeme it,praie I Jesus good
Dreame he barefoote or dreame he shood
That euery harme that any man
Hath had sith the worlde began
Befall hym thereof or he sterue
And graunt that he maie it deserue

Lo,with right soche a conclusion
Is had of his auision
Cresus,that was kyng of Lide
That high vpon a gibet dide
This praier shall he haue of me
I am no bette in charitee.

Now herken,as I haue you saied
What that I mette or I abraied
Of December the tenth daie
When it was night,to slepe I laie
Right as I was wonte to doen
And till a slepe wonder sone
As he that was werie forgo
On pilgrimage miles twoo
To the corps of sainct Leonarde
To maken lithe,that erst was harde
But as me slept me mette I was
Within a temple imade of glas
In whiche there were mo Images
Of golde,standyng in sondrie stages
In mo riche Tabernacles
And with perre mo pinnacles
And mo curious portratures
And queint maner of figures
Of golde worke,then I sawe euer
But certainly I nist neuer
Where that it was,but well wist I
It was of Uenus redely
This temple,for in purtreture
I sawe anone right her figure
Naked fletyng in a see
And also on her hedde parde
Her rose garlande white and redde
And her combe to kembe her hedde
Her douues,and Dan Cupido
Her blinde sonne,and Vulcano
That in his face was full broune
But as I romed vp and doune
I founde that on the wall there was
Thus written on a table of bras
I woll now syng if that I can
The armes,and also the man
That first came through his destine
Fugitife fro Troye the countre
Into Italie,with full moche pine
Unto the strondes of Lauine
And tho began the storie anone
As I shall tellen you echone
First sawe I the distruccion
Of Troie,through the Grehe Sinon
With his false vntrue forswerynges
And with his chere and his lesynges
Made a horse,brought into Troye
By whiche Troians loste all her ioye

And after this was graued, alas
How Ilions castell assailed was
And won, and kyng Priamus slain
And Polites his sonne certain
Dispitously of Dan Pirrus
And next that sawe I how Uenus
When that she sawe the castell brende
Doune from heauen she gan discende
And bade her sonne Eneas to flee
And how he fled, and how that he
Escaped was from all the prees
And tooke his father, olde Anchises
And bare hym on his backe awaie
Criyng alas and wela waie
The whiche Anchises in his hande
Bare tho the Goddes of the lande
Thilke that vnbrenned were
Then sawe I next all in fere
How Crusa, Dan Eneas wife
Whom that he loued all his life
And her yong sonne Iulo
And eke Ashanius also
Fledden eke, with drerie chere
That it was pitie for to heare
And in a Forest as thei went
At a tournyng of a went
How Crusa was ilost, alas
That rede not I, how that it was
How he her sought, and how her ghoste
Bad hym flie the Grekes hoste
And saied he must into Italie
As was his destinie, launs faile
That it was pitie for to heare
When her spirite gan appeare
The wordes that she to hym saied
And for to kepe her sonne hym praied
There sawe I grauen eke how he
His father eke, and his meine
With his Shippes gan to saile
Toward the countrey of Italie
As streight as thei mighten go
There sawe I eke the cruell Juno
That art Dan Jupiters wife
That hast ihated all thy life
All the Troian brood
Ren and crie as thou were wood
On Eolus, the God of Windes
To blowen out of all kindes
So loude, that he should drenche
Lorde, Ladie, grome, and wenche
Of all the Troians nacion
Without any of her sauacion
There sawe I soche tempest arise
That euery harte might agrise
To see it painted on the wall
There sawe I eke grauen with all
Uenus, how ye my Ladie dere
Wepyng with full wofull chere
Praiyng Jupiter on hie
To saue and kepe that nauie
Of that Troian Eneas
Sithe that he her sonne was
There sawe I Joues Uenus kisse
And graunted was of the tempest lisse
There sawe I how the tempest stente
And how with all pine he went
And priuelie tooke a riuage
Into the countrie of Cartage
And on the morowe how that he
And a Knight that height Achate
Metten with Uenus that daie
Goyng in a queinte araie
As she had be an huntéresse
With winde blowyng vpon her tresse
And how Eneas began to plaine
When he knewe her of his paine
And how his Shippes dreint were
Or els ilost, he nist where
How she gan hym comforte tho
And bade hym to Cartage go
And there he should his folke finde
That in the sea were left behinde
And shortly of this thyng to pace
She made Eneas so in grace
Of Dido, Quene of that countree
That shortly for to tellen, she
Became his loue, and let hym do
All that weddyng longeth to
What should I speake it more quainte
Or pain me my wordes to painte
To speake of loue, it woll not bee
I can not of that facultee
And eke to tellen of the manere
How thei first acquainted were
It were a long processe to tell
And ouer long for you to dwell.
There sawe I graue how Eneas
Tolde to Dido euery caas
That hym was tidde vpon the see
And eft grauen was how that she
Wade of hym shortly at a worde
Her life, her loue, her lust, her lorde
And did to hym all reuerence
And laied on hym all the dispence
That any woman might do
Wenyng it had all be so
As he her swore, and hereby demed
That he was good, for he soche semed
Alas what harme doeth apparence
When it is false in existence

For

For he to her a traitour was
Wherefore she slowe her self alas
Lo,how a woman doeth amis
To loue hym that vnknowen is
For by Christ,lo thus it fareth ¶
It is not all golde that glareth
For also brouhe I well myne hedde
There maie be vnder goodlihedde
Couered many a shrewde vice
Therefore be no wight so nice
To take a loue onely for chere ¶
Or speache or for frendly manere
For this shall euery woman finde
That some man of his pure kinde
Woll shewen outward the fairest
Till he haue caught that what hym lest
And then woll he causes finde
And swere how she is vnkinde
Or falle or priuie,or double was
All this saie I by Eneas ¶
And Dido,and her nice lest
That loued all to sone a gest
Wherefore I woll saie o prouerbe
That he that fullie knoweth the herbe
Maie safely laie it to his eye
Withouten drede this is no lie
But let vs speake of Eneas
How he betraied her,alas
And lefte her full vnkindelie
So when she sawe all vtterlie ¶
That he would her of trouth faile
And wenden from her into Itaile
She gan to wring her handes twoo
Alas(q she)that me is woo
Alas,is euery man thus true
That euery yere woll haue a newe
If it so long tyme endure
Or els three parauenture ⁂
And thus of one he woll haue fame
In magnifiyng of his owne name
In other for frendship saieth he
And yet there shall the thirde be
That is taken for delite
Lo, or els for singuler profite
In soche wordes gan complaine ¶
Dido of her greate paine
As me mette dreamyng readily
None other aucthour aledge woll I
Alas(q she)my swete harte
Haue pitie on my sorowes smarte
And slea me not,go not awaie
O wofull Dido,welawaie ¶
(q she)vnto her self tho
O Eneas what woll ye do
O that your loue ne your honde
That ye swore with your right honde
Ne my cruell death(q she)
Maie holde you still here with me
O,haue ye of my death no pitee
Iwis myne owne deare harte ye
Knowe full well that neuer yet
As farre as euer I had wit
Agilte you,in thought ne in dede
O,haue ye men soche goodlihede
In speache,and neuer a dele of trouthe
Alas that euer had routhe
Any woman on a false man
Now I see well,and tell can
We wretched women can no arte
For certaine,for the more parte
Thus we been serued euerichone
How sore that ye men can grone
Anon as we haue you receiued
Certainlie we been disceiued
For though your loue lest a ceason
Waite vpon the conclusion
And eke how ye determine
And for the more parte define
O welawaie that I was borne
For through you my name is lorne
And myne actes redde and song
Ouer all this lande in euery tong
O wicked fame,for there nis
Nothyng so swifte lo as she is
O sothe is,euery thyng is wist
Though it be couerde with the mist
Eke though I might duren euer
That I haue doen recouer I neuer
That it ne shall be saied,alas
I shamed was through Eneas
And that I shall thus iudged be
Lo right as she hath doen,now she
Woll doen eftsones hardely
Thus saie the people priuely
But that is doen nis not to done
But all her complaint ne her mone
Certain auailed her not a stre
And when she wist sothly,he
Was forthe into his ship agone
She into chamber went anone
And called on her suster Anne
And gan her to complain thanne
And saied,that she cause was
That she first loued hym,alas
And first counsailed her thereto
But what,when this was saied and do
She rofte her selue to the harte
And deide through the woundes smarte
But all the maner how she deide
And all the wordes how she seide

who

Who so to knowe it hath purpose
Rede Virgile in Eneidos
Or the Pistels of Ouide
What that he wrote, or that he dide
And nere it to long to endite
By God I would it here write
But welawaie, the harme and routh
That hath betide for soche vntrouth
As men maie oft in bookes rede
And aldaie seen it yet in dede
That for to thinken it tene is
Lo Demophon, Duke of Athenis
How he forswore hym falsely,
And traied Phillis wickedly
That kynges doughter was of Thrace
And falsely gan his terme pace
And when she wist that he was false
She hong her self right by the halse
For he had doen her soche vntrouth
Lo, was not this a wo and routh.
Eke loke how false and recheles
Was to Briseida Achilles
And Paris to Oenone
And Jason to Hipsipyle
And efte Jason to Medea
And Hercules to Dianira
For he left her for Jolee
That made hym take his death parde.
How false was eke Theseus
That as the storie telleth vs
How he betraied Adriane
The deuill be his soules bane
For had he laughed or floured
He must haue been all deuoured
If Adriane ne had bee
And for she had of hym pitee
She made hym fro the death escape
And he made her a full false iape
For after this within a while
He left her slepyng in an Ile
Desert alone right in the see
And stale awaie and let her bee
And tooke her suster Phedra tho
With hym, and gan to shippe go
And yet he had sworne to here
On all that euer he could swere
That so she saued hym his life
He would taken her to his wife
For she desired nothyng elles
In certain, as the booke vs telles
But for to excuse this Eneas
Fulliche of all his greate trespas
The booke saieth sauns faile
The Goddes bad hym go to Itaile
And leauen Affriques regioun
And faire Dido and her toun
Tho sawe I graue how to Itaile
Dan Eneas gan for to saile
And how the tempest all began
And how he loste his stiresman
Whiche that the sterne, or he tooke kepe
Smote ouer the borde as he slepe.
And also saugh I how Sibile
And Eneas beside an Ile
To helle went for to see
His father Anchises the free
And how he there founde Palimurus
And also Dido, and Deiphebus
And euerichetourment eke in hell
Sawe he, whiche long is for to tell
Whiche paines who so liste to knowe
He muste rede many a rowe
In Virgile or in Claudian
Or Dante, that it tellen can.
Tho sawe I eke all the ariuaile
That Eneas had made in Itaile
And with kyng Latin his treate
And all the battailes that he
Was at hymself, and his knightes
Or he had all iwonne his rightes
And how he Turnus refte his life
And wan Lauina to his wife
And all the marueilous signals
Of the Goddes celestials
How maugre Juno, Eneas
For all her sleighe and her compas
Atcheued all his auenture
For Jupiter tooke on hym cure
At the praier of Venus
Whiche I praie alwaie saue vs
And vs aie, of our sorowes light
When I had seen all this sight
In this noble temple thus
Hey Lorde thought I, that madest vs
Yet sawe I neuer soche noblesse
Of Images, nor soche richesse
As I see grauen in this churche
But nought wote I who did hem worche
Ne where I am, ne in what countree
But now will I out gone and see
Right at the wicked if I can
Seen ought where sterynge any man
That maie me tellen where I am
When I out of the doore cam
I saste about me beheldе
Then sawe I but a large felde
As farre as euer I might see
Without toune, house, or tree
Or bushe, or grasse, or eared lande
For all the felde was but of sande

As smal as men maye se at eye
In the deserte of Lybye
Ne no maner creature
That is yformed by nature
Ne sawe I, me to rede or wisshe
O Christ thought I, that are in blisse
From fantom and illusion
Me saue, and with deuocyon
Myne yen to the heuen I caste
Tho was I ware, lo at the laste
That saste by the sonne on hie
As kenne myght I with mine eye
Me thought I sawe an Egle sore
But that it semed moche more
Than I had anye Egle yseine
This is as sothe as death certaine
It was of golde and shone so bright
That neuer sawe men soche a sight
But yf the heuen had ywonne
Al newe of god another sonne
So shone the Egles fethers bright
And somwhat downwarde gan it lyght.

Explicit liber primus.

Nowe herken euerye maner man
That Englishe vnderstande can
And lysteth of my dreme to here
For now at erst shal ye lere
So sely and so dredefull a vysyon
That I saye neither Scipion
Ne kinge Nabugodonosore
Pharao, Turnus, ne Alcanore
Ne metten soche a dreme as this
Nowe saire blisful, O Cipris
So be my sauour at this time
That ye me tendite and rime
Helpeth, that in Pernaso dwel
Besyde Elicon the clere wel
O thought, that wrote al that I met
And in the tresorie it set
Of my braine, nowe shal men se
If any vertue in the be
To tel al my dreme aright
Nowe kithe thy engin and thy might
This Egle of whiche I haue you tolde
That with fethers shone al of golde
Whiche that so hie gan to sore
I gan beholde more and more
To sene her beaute an the wonder
But neuer was that dente of thynder
Ne that thinge that men cal soudre
That smite somtime a toure to poudre
And in his swifte comminge brende
That so swithe gan downwarde discende
As this foule whan it beheld
That I a rowme was in the felde
And with his grim pawes stronge
Within his sharpe nailes longe
Me fleyng at a swappe he hente
And with his sours again vp wente
Me cariyng in his clawes starke
As lyghtly as I had ben a larke
Howe hye I can not tellen yowe
For I came vp, I nist neuer howe
For so astonied an al weued
Was euery vertue in me heued
What with his sours and my dred
That al my sekinge gan to deed
For why, it was a great affraye
Thus I longe in his clawes laye
Til at last he to me spake
In mannes voice, and said awake
And be not agast so for shame
And called me tho by my name
And for I shulde better abraide
Me to a wake, thus he saide
Right in the same voice and steuin
That dleth one that I can neuin
And with that voice sothe to saine
My minde came to me againe
For it was goodly saide to me
So nas it neuer wonte to be
And here withal I gan to stere
As he me in his fete bere
Til that he felte that I had heate
And felte eke tho mine hearte beate
And tho gan he me to disporte
And with gentel wordes me comforte
And said twyse, saint Mary
Thou arte a noyous thinge to cary
And nothinge nedeth it perde
For also wise god helpe me
As thou no harme shalte haue of this
And this case that betidde the is
As for thy lore and for thy prowe
Lette se, darst thou loke yet nowe
Be ful ensured boldely
I am thy frende, and therwith I
Gan for to wonder in my minde
O God (quod I) that madest al kinde
Shal I none otherwise die
Whether Ioue wil me stellifie
Or what thing maye this signifie
I am neither Enoche ne Helye
Ne Romulus, ne Ganymede

That were boze vp as men rede
To heuen with dan Jupiter
And made the goddes boteler
Lo,this was tho my fantasie
But he that bare gan aspie
That I so thought and said this
Thou demist of thy selfe amyes
For Joue is not there aboute
I dare the put ful out of doute
To make of the yet a sterre
But er I beare the moche ferre
I wil the tel what I am
And whider thou shalte,and why I came
To do this,so that thou take
Good hearte,and not for feare quake
Gladly(quod I)nowe wel(quod he)
First,I that in my sete haue the
Of whom thou haste feare and wonder
I am dwellinge with the god of thonder
Whiche men callen Jupiter
That doth me flyen ful ofte fer
To do all his commaundement
And for this cause he hath me sent
To the:Herke nowe by thy trouthe
Certaine he hath of the routhe
That thou haste so truely
Longe serued ententetily
His blinde newe Cupido
And faire Venus also
Without guerdon euer yet
And netheles hast set thy wit
Althoughe in thy heed ful litel is
To make bookes,songes and ditees
In rime or els in Cadence
As thou best canst in reuerence
Of loue,and of his seruauntes eke
That haue his seruice sought,and seke
And painest the to praise his arte
Althoughe thou haddest neuer parte
Wherfore also god me blesse
Jouis halte it great humblesse
And vertue,eke that thou wilte make
A night ful ofte thine heed to ake
In thy studye so thou writest
And euermore of loue enditest
In honour of him and prailinges
And in his folkes fourtheringes
And in her mater al deuisest
And not him ne his folke dispisest
Althoughe thou maiste go in the daunce
Of hem,that him lyst not auaunce
Wherfore as I saide ywis
Jupiter considereth wel this
And also beausire,of other thinges
That is thou haste no tidinges
Of loues folke if they be glade
Ne of nothinge els that god made
And not onely fro ferre countre
That no thidinges comen to the
Not of thy very neighbours
That dwellen almost at thy doores
Thou herest neither that ne this
For whan thy labour al done is
And haste made al thy recheninges
In stede of reste and of newe thinges
Thou goest home to thine house anone
And also dombe as a stone
Thou sittest at another boke
Tyl fully dased is thy loke
And lyuest thus as an Hermite
Although thine abstinence is lyte
And therfore Jouis throughe his grace
Wil that I beare thee to a place
Whiche that hight the house of Fame
And to doethe sporte and game
In some recompensation
Of thy labour and deuocion
That thou haste hadde,so causeles
To god Cupido the recheles
And thus this God throughe his merite
Wil with some maner thing the quite
So that thou wilte be of good chere
For trust wel that thou shalte here
Whan we ben comen there as I say
Mo wonder thinges dare I lay
And of loues folke mo tidinges
Bothe sothsawes and lesynges
And mo loues newe be gon
And longe serued tyl loue is won
And mo louers casuelly
That ben betide,no man wote why
But as a blinde man starteth an Hare
And more solite and welfare
While they finde loue of stele
As thinke men,and ouer al wele
Mo discordes and mo ialousies
Mo murmures,and mo nouelries
And also mo dissimulacions
And eke feined reperacions
And mo berdes in two houres
Without rasour or sisoures
Ymade,than graines be of sandes
And eke mo holdinge in mo handes
And also mo renouelaunces
Of olde forleten aqueintaunces
Mo loue dayes,and mo accordes
Than on instrumentes ben cordes
And eke of loue mo exchaunges
Than euer corne were in graunges
Vnneth maist thou trowen this

(quod he)

(q he)no so helpe me god as wis
(q I)No why(q he)for it
Were impossible to my wit
Though Fame had al the pyes
In al a realme and al aspies
Howe that yet he y shulde here al this
Or they espien,Oyes yes
(q he)to me,that can I preue
By reason,worthy for to leue
So that thou giue thin aduertence
To vnderstande my sentence
First shal thou here where she dwelleth
Right so as thin owne booke telleth
Her palais standeth as I shal say
Right euen a middes of the way
Betwene heuen,yerthe,and see
That what so euer in al these thre
Is spoken in priue or apperte
The way therto is so ouerte
And stante eke in so iuste a place
That euery sowne mote to it pace
Or what so cometh from anie tongue
Be rowned,redde,or songe
Or spoken in suerte or drede
Certaine it mote thider nede
Nowe herken wel for why I wil
Tellen the a proper skil
And a worthy demonstracion
In mine imaginacion
Geffray,thou wottest wel this
That euery kindely thinge that is
Hath a kyndely stede there he
May best in it conserued be
Vnto whiche place euery thinge
Through his kyndely enclininge
Moueth for to come to
Whan that it is away therfro
Is thus. Lo howe thou maiste al day se
Take any thinge that heuy be
As stone or leed,or thinge of weight
And bere it neuer so hie on height
Let go thine hande,it falleth downe
Right so say I by fire or sowne
Or smoke,or other thinges light
Alway they seke vpwarde on height
Light thinges vp,and downwarde charge
Whyle eueriche of hem be at large
And for this cause,thou maist wel se
That euery riuer vnto the see
Enclined is to go by kynde
And by these skilles as I finde
Haue fisshes dwellinge in flode and se
And trees eke on the erthe be
Thus euery thinge by his reason
Hath his owne proper mancion
To whiche he seketh to repaire
There as it shulde nat appaire
Lo,this sentence is knowen couthe
Of euery Philosophers mouthe
As aristotel,and dan Platone
And other clerches many one
And to confirme my reasoune
Thou woste wel that speche is sowne
Or elis no man might it here
Nowe herke what I wol the lere
Sowne is not but eyre ybroken
And euery speche that is spoken
Loude or priue,foule or faire
In his substaunce is but eyre
For as flame is but lighted smoke
Right so is sowne eyre ybroke
But this may be in many wise
Of whiche I will the deuise
As sowne cometh of pype or harpe
For whan a pype is blowen sharpe
The eyre is twist with violence
And rent: Lo,this is my sentence
Eke,whan men harpe stringes smyte
Wheder it be moche or lyte
Lo,with the stroke the eyre it breketh
And right so breaketh it whā men speketh
Thus wost thou wel what thing is speche
Nowe hens forthe,I wil thee teche
Howe eueriche speche,voice or sowne
Throughe his multiplicacion
Thoughe it were piped of a mouse
Mote nedes come to Fames house.
I proue it thus,take hede nowe
By experience,for if that thou
Threwe in a water nowe a stone
Wel woste thou it wil make anone
A litel roundel as a cercle
Paraventure,as brode as a couercle
And right anone thou shalte se wele
That whele cercle wil cause another whele
And that the thirde,and so forthe brothes
Euery cercle causinge other
Broder than him selfe was
And thus from roundel to compas
Eche aboute other goinge
Causeth of others stirtinge
And multyplying euermo
Tyl it be to fare go
That it at bothe brinkes be
Although thou maye it not se
Aboue,yet gothe it alwaye vnder
Though thou thinke it a great wonder
And who so saithe of trouthe I vary
Bydde him proue the contrary
And right thus euery worde ywis

That loude or pryue yspoken is
Moueth firste an eyre aboute
And of his mouinge out of doute
Another eyre anone is moued
As I haue of the water proued
That euerye cercle causeth other
Right so of eyre my leue brother
Euerichе eyre in other stereth
More and more, and speche bereth
Or voise or noyse, worde or sowne
Aye throughe multiplicacioune
Tyl it be at the house of Fame
Take it on ernest or in game
Nowe haue I tolde, if thou haue mind
Howe speche or sowne, of pure kinde
Enclined is upwarde to meue
This maist thou fele wel by preue
And that some stede ywis
That euery thinge enclined to is
Hath his kyndelyche stede
That sheweth it without drede
That kindely the mancioun
Of euerychе speche of euery soun
Be it either soule or faire
Hath his kinde place in eyre
And sith that euery thinge ywis
Out of his kinde place ywis
Moueth thider for to go
yf it awaye be therfro
As I haue before proued the
It sheweth euery soune perde
Moueth kindely to pace
As up in to his kinde place
And this place of whiche I tel
There as Fame lisse to dwell
Is sette a middes of these thre
Heuen, erthe and che the see
As moste conseruatife the soun
Than is this the concluslioun
That euery speche of euery manne
As I thee tel firste beganne
Moueth up on height to pace
Kindely to Fames place
Tel me this nowe faithfully
Haue I not proued thus simply
Without any subtelte
Of speche, or great prolixyte
Of termes of Philosophie
Of figures of Poetrie
Or colours of Rhetorike
Perde it oughte the to like
For harde langage, and harde matere
Is in combrous for to here
At ones, wolde thou not wel this
And I answered and saide yes

Ah ha(q he)lo so I can
Leudlye vnto a leude man
Speke, and shewe him soche shrewes
That he maye shake hem by the bylles
So palpable they shulden be
But tel me this nowe praye I the
Howe thinketh the my conclusioun
A good persuasioun
(q I)it is and lyke to be
Right so as thou haste proued me
By God(q he)and as I leue
Thou shalte haue it or it be eue
Of euery worde of this sentence
I prose, by experience
And with thine eares hearen wel
Toppe and taile, and euery del
That euery worde that spoken is
Cometh in to Fames house ywis
As I haue saide, what wilte thou more
And with this worde vpper to sore
He began, and saide by sainte Jame
Nowe wyll we speake al of game
Howe farest thou nowe(q he)to me
Wel(q I)nowe se(q he)
By thy trouthe yonde adowne
Where that thou knowest any towne
Or house, or any other thinge
And whan thou haste of ought knowynge
Loke that thou warne me
And I anone shal tel the
Howe farre that thou arte nowe therfro
And I adowne gan to loken tho
And beheelde feldes and plaines
Nowe hylles, and nowe mountaines
Nowe valeys, and nowe forestes
And nowe vnneth great beestes
Nowe riuers, nowe citees
Nowe townes, nowe great trees
Nowe shippes sailinge in the see
But thus soone in a whyle he
Was flowen fro the grounde so hye
That al the worlde as to myne eye
No more semed than a pricke
Or els was the eyre so thicke
That I might it not discerne
With that he spake to me so yerne
And said: Seest thou any token
Or ought, that in this worlde of spoken
I saide naye, no wonder is
(q he)for neuer halfe so hye as this
Nas Alexander of Macedon
Kynge: Ne of Rome dan Scipion
That sawe in dreame at pointe deuise
Heuen and erthe, hel and paradise
Ne eke the wretche Dedalus

Ne his childe nice Icharus
That flewe so hie, that the hete
Hys winge molte, and he fel wete
In mydde the see, and there he dreinte
For whom was made a great complainte
Nowe tourne vpwarde (q he) thy face
And beholde this large place
This eyre, but loke that thou ne be
Adrad of hem that thou shalt se
For in this regioun certaine
Dwelleth nany a citezeine
Of whiche speketh dan Plato
These ben the eyrishe beestes lo
And tho sawe I al the menye
Bothe gone and also flye
Lo (q he) cast vp thine eye
Se yonder lo, the Galaxie
The whiche men clepe the milky way
For it is white: And some parfay
Callen it Watlynge strete
That ones was brente with the heate
Whan the Sunnes sonne the reade
That hite Pheton wolde leade
Algate his fathers carte, and gie
The carte horse gan wel aspie
That he coude no gouernaunce
And gon for to lepe and praunce
And beare him vp, and nowe downe
Tyl he sawe the Scorpiowne
Whiche that in heuen a signe is yet
And he for fere loste his wit
Of that, and let the reines gone
Of his horse, and they anone
Soone vp to mounte, and downe discende
Tyl bothe eyre and erthe brende
Tyl Jupiter lo, at the laste
Hym slewe, and fro the carte caste
Lo, is it not a great mischaunce
To let a foole haue gouernaunce
Of thinges that he can not demaine
And with this worde sothe for to saine
He gan alway vpper to sore
And gladed me than more and more
So faithfully to me spake he
Tho gan I to loke vnder me
And behelde the eyrishe beestes
Cloudes, mystes, and tempestes
Snowes, hailes, raines, and windes
And thengendringe in her kindes
Al the way throughe whiche I came
O god (q I) that made Adame
Moche is thy myght and nobles
And tho thought I vpon Boece
That writeth a thought may flye so hie
With fethers of Philosophie
To passen eueryche Element
And when he hath so farre ywent
Than may ben sene behinde his backe
Cloude, and erthe, and al that I of spake
Tho gan I wexe in a were
And said, I wote wel I am here
But whether in body or in goost
I not ywis, but god thou woost
For more clere entendement
Nas me neuer yet ysent
And than thought I on Marcian
And eke of Anticlaudian
That sothe was her discripcion
Of al the heuens region
As farre as that I sawe the preue
And therfore I can hem leue
With that the Egle gan to crie
Let be (q he) thy fantasie
Wylte thou lerne of sterres ought
Nay certainly (q I) right nought
And why (q he) for I am olde
Or els wolde I the haue tolde
(q he) the sterres names lo
And al the heuens signes to
And whiche they be: No force (q I)
Yes perde (q he) wost thou why
For whan thou redest poetry
Howe the goddes can stellify
Birde, fysshe, or him, or her
As the Rauyn and other
Or Ariones harpe fyne
Castor, Polexe, or Delphine
Or Athalantes doughters seuen
How al these are set in heuen
For though thou haue hem ofte in hande
Yet nost thou nat where they stande
No force (q I) it is no nede
As wel I leue so god me spede
Hem that writen of this matere
As though I knewe her places here
And eke thy seluen here so bright
It shulde shenden al my sight
To loke on hem, that may wel be
(q he) and so forth bare he me
A while, and tho be gan to crie
That neuer herde I thinge so hie
Holde vp thine heed, for al is wel
Sainte Julyan lo, bonne hostel
Se here the house of Fame lo
Maist thou not here that I do
What (q I) the great sowne
(q he) that rombleth vp and downe
In Famest house ful of tidinges
Bothe of faire speche and chidinges
And of false, and sothe compowned

Herken wel it is not rowned
Herest thou not the great swough
Yes perde(quod I) wel ynough
And what sowne is it lyke(quod he)
Peter, lyke the beating of the see
(quod I) againste the roches halowe
Whan tempestes done her shyppes swalowe
And that a man stande out of doute
A myle thens, and here it route
Or els lyke the humblinge
After the clappe of a thundringe
Whan Iouis hath the eyre ybete
But it dothe me for feare swete
Nay, drede the not therof(quod he)
It is nothing that wil byten the
Thou shalt haue no harme truely
And with that worde both he and I
As nighe the place arrived were
As men might cast with a spere
I niste howe, but in a strete
He set me faire on my fete
And said, walke forth a pace
And tel thine aduenture and case
That thou shalte finde in fames place
Nowe(quod I) while we haue space
To spene, or that I go fro the
For the loue of god tel me
In sothe, that I wil of the lere
If this noise that I here
Be as I haue herde the tel
Of folke that done in erthe dwell
And cometh here in the same wise
As I the herde or this deuise
And that here liues body nis
In al that house that yonder is
That maketh al this loude fare
No(quod he) by sainte Clare
And also wisse god rede me
But o thinge I will warne the
Of the whiche thou wilte haue wonder
Lo, to the house of Fame yonder
Thou woste howe cometh euery speche
It needeth not the efte to teche
But vnderstande nowe right wel this
Whan any speche ycomen is
Vp to the palais anone right
It wereth like the same wight
Whiche that the worde in earth spake
Be he clothed in reed or blake
And hath so very his likenesse
And spake the worde that thou wilte gesse
That it the same body be
Man or woman, he or she
And is not this a wonder thinge
Yes(quod I tho) by heuen kinge
And with this worde farewel(quod he)
And here wil I abyde the
And god of heuen sende the grace
Some good to learne in this place
And I of him take leaue anone
And gan forth to the palays gone.

Explicit liber secundus.

God of science and of light
Apollo through thy great might
This litel last boke nowe thou gye
Nowe that I will for maistrie
Here arte potensiall be shewde
But for the rime is lyght and lewde
Yet make it somwhat agreable
Though some verse faile in a sillable
And that I do no diligence
To shewe crafte, but sentence
And if deuine vertue thou
Wilte helpe me to shewe nowe
That in my heed ymarked is
Lo, that is for to meanen this
The house of Fame for to diserive
Thou shalt se me go as blyue
Vnto the next laurer I se
And kysse it, for it is thy tree
Nowe entre in my brest anone
Whan I was from the egle gone
I gan beholde vpon this place
And certaine or I further passe
I wol you al the shappe deuise
Of house and cite, and al the wise
Howe I gan to this place approche
That stode vpon so hie a roche
Ne per standeth none in Spaine
But vp I clambe with moche paine
And though to climbe greued me
yet I ententife was to se
And for to porren wondrelowe
If I coude any wise yknowe
What maner stone this roche was
For it was lyked a limed glas
But that it shone ful more clere
But of what congeled matere
It was, I nisse redely
But at the laste espied I
And founde that it was euerydele
A roche of yse and not of stele
Thought I by saint Thomas of Kent

This

This were a feble foundement
To builden on a place hie
He ought hym little to glorifie
That heron bilte, God so me saue
Tho sawe I all the hall igraue
With famous folkes names fele
That had been in moche wele
And her fames wide iblowe
But well vnneth might I knowe
Any letters for to rede
Her names by, for out of drede
Thei weren almoste of thawed so
That of the letters one or two
Were molte awaie of euery name
So vnfamous was were her fame
But men saie, what maie euer last
Tho gan I in myne harte cast
That thei were molte awaie for heate
And not awaie with stormes beate
For on that other side I sey
Of this hill, that Northward ley
How it was writen full of names
Of folke that had afore greate fames
Of olde tyme, and yet thei were
As freshe as men had written hem there
The self daie, or that houre
That I on hem gan to poure
But well I wiste what it made
It was conserued with the shade
All the writyng that I sie
Of a Castell that of stoode on hie
And stoode eke in so cold a place
That heate might it not deface
Tho gan I on this hill to gone
And found on the coppe a wone
That all the men that been on liue
Ne han the connyng to discriue
The beaute of that ilke place
Ne coud caste no compace
Soche an other for to make
That might of beautie be his make
Ne so wonderly iwrought
That it astonieth yet my thought
And maketh all my witte to swinke
On this Castell for to thinke
So that the greate beautie
The caste, crafte, and curiositie
Ne can I not to you deuise
My witte ne maie me not suffise
But natheless all the substaunce
I haue yet in my remembraunce
For why me thought by sainct Gile
All was of stone of Berile
Bothe the Castell and the Toure
And eke the hall, and euery boure
Without peces or ioynynges
But many subtell compassynges
As babeuries and pinnacles
Imageries and tabernacles
I sawe, and full eke of windowes
As flakes fallen in greate Snowes
And eke in eche of the pinacles
Weren sondrie habitacles
In whiche stoden all withouten
Full the castell all abouten
Of all maner of Minstrales
And Jestours that tellen tales
Bothe of wepyng and of game
And of all that longeth vnto fame
There heard I plaie on an Harpe
That souned bothe well and sharpe
Hym Orpheus full craftely
And on this side fast by
Satte the Harper Orion
And Gacides Chiron
And other Harpers many one
And the Briton Glasbirion
And smale Harpers with her glees
Satte vnder hem in diuers sees
And gone on hem vpwarde to gape
And counterfaited hem as an Ape
Or as crafte counterfeite hinde
Tho sawe I standen hem behinde
A farre from hem, all by hem selue
Many a thousande tymes twelue
That made loude Minstralsies
In Cornmuse and Shalmies
And many an other pipe
That craftely began to pipe
Bothe in Douced and in Rede
That been at feastes with the brede
And many a Floite and litlyng horne
And pipes made of grene Corne
As haue these little heerde gromes
That kepen beastes in the Bromes
There sawe I then dan Citherus
And of Athenes dan Pyolerus
And Mercia that loste her shinne
Bothe in face, bodie, and chinne
For that she would enuien, so
To pipen bette then Apollo
There sawe I eke famous old and yong
Pipers of all the Duche tong
To learne loue daunces, springes
Reyes, and the straunge thinges
Tho sawe I in an other place
Standyng in a large space
Of hem that maken bloodie soun
In trumpe beme, and Clarioun
For in fight and bloodshedynges

Is bled glad clarionynges
There heard I trumpe Mellenus
Of whom that speaketh Vergilius
There heard I Joab trumpe also
Theodomas and other mo
And all that bled clarion
In Casteloigne, and Aragon
That in her tymes famous were
To learnen sawe I trumpen there
There sawe I sit in other sees
Playyng vpon other sondrie glees
Whiche that I can not neuen
Wo then Sterres been in heauen
Of whiche I nill as now not rime
For ease of you, and losse of time
For tyme ilost, this knowe ye
By no waie maie recouered be
There sawe I playyng Jogelours
Magiciens and Tragetours
And Phetonisses Charmeresses
Olde Witches Sorceresses
That vsen Exorsisacions
And eke fumigacions
And clerkes eke whiche conne well
All this Magike naturell
That craftely doe her ententes
To maken in certain ascendentes
Images lo, through whiche Magike
To maken a man been hole or sike
There sawe I the quene Medea
And Circes eke, and Caliophia
There sawe I Hermes Ballenus
Limote, and eke Symon Magus
There sawe I, and knewe by name
That by soche arte doen men haue fame
There sawe I Coll Tragetour
Upon a table of Sicamour
Playe an vncouth thyng to tell
I sawe hym cary a winde Mell
Under a Walnote shale
What should I make lenger tale
Of all the people that I sey
I could not tell till Domisdey
When I had all this folke beholde
And sounde me loce and not holde
And I amused a long while
Upon this wall of Berile
That shone lighter then a glas
And made well more then it was
As kinde thing of fame is
And then anone after this
I gan forthe romen till I fonde
The castell yate on my right honde
Whiche so well corsen was
That neuer soche an other nas
And yet it was by auenture
Iwrought by greate and subtill cure
It nedeth not you more to tellen
To make you to long dwellen
Of these yates florishynges
Ne of compaces, ne of karuynges
Ne how the hackyng in Malonries
As corbettes, and Imageries
But Lorde so faire it was to shewe
For it was all with golde behewe
But in I went, and that anone
There met I criyng many one
Alarges a larges, holde vp well
God saue the ladie of this pell
Our owne gentill Ladie Fame
And hem that willen to haue a name
Of vs, thus heard I crien all
And fast comen out of the hall
And shope nobles and starlynges
And crouned were as kynges
With crounes wrought full of Lorynges
And many ribans, and many fringes
Were on her clothes truely
Tho at the last espied I
That Purseuauntes and Heraudes
That crien riche folkes laudes
It weren, all and euery man
Of hem, as I you tell can
Had on hym throwe a besture
Whiche men clepe a coate armure
Embroudred wonderly riche
As though thei were not iliche
But nought will I so mote I thriue
Be aboute to discriue
All these armes that there weren
That thei thus on her coates weren
For to me were impossible
Men might make of hem a bible
Twentie foote thicke as I trowe
For certain who so could knowe
Might there all the armes seen
Of famous folke that had been
In Afrike, Europe, and Asie
Sith first began cheualrie
Lo, how should I now tell all this
Ne of the hall eke what nede is
To tellen you that euery wall
Of it, and rofe and flore with all
Was plated halfe a foote thicke
Of golde, and that nas not wicke
But for to proue in all wise
As fine as ducket in Venise
Of whiche to lite all in my pouche is
And thei were set as thicke of ouches
Fine, of the finest stones faire

That

That men reden in the lapidaire
Or as Grasses growen in a Mede
But it were all to long to rede
The names: and therefore I pace
But in this lustie and riche place
That Fames hall called was
Full moche preess of folke there nas
Ne croudyng, for to moche preess
But all on hie aboue a dees
Satte in a see Imperiall
That made was of Rubie roiall
Whiche that a Carbuncle is icalled
I sawe perpetually istalled
A femine creature
That neuer formed by nature
Was soche an other thyng I saie
For altherfirste, sothe to saie
Me thought that she was so lite
That the length of a cubite
Was lenger then she semed be
But thus sone in a while she
Her self tho wonderly streight
That with her feete she therthe reight
And with her hedde she touched heauen
There as shineth the Sterres seuen
And thereto yet, as to my wit
I sawe a greate wonder yet
Upon her iyen to beholde
But certainly I hem neuer tolde
For as fele iyen had she
As fethers upon foules be
Or weren on the beastes foure
That Goddes trone can honoure
As writeth Jhon in the Apocalips
Her heer that was owndie and crips
As burned golde it shone to se
And sothe to tellen also she
Had also fele up standyng eares
And tonges, as on beast been heares
And on her feete woxen sawe I
Partriche winges redily.
But Lorde the perrie and the richesse
I sawe sittyng on the Goddesse
And the heauenly melodie
Of songes full of armonie
I herde about her trone isong
That all the palais wall rong
So songe the mightie Muse she
That cleped is Caliope
And her seuen sisterne eke
That in her faces semen meke
And euermore eternally
Thei songe of Fame tho heard I
Heried be thou and thy name
Goddes of renoun and of Fame

Tho was I ware at the last
As I myne iyen gan up cast
That this ilke noble Quene
On her shulders gan sustene
Bothe the armes and the name
Of tho that had large Fame
Alisander, and Hercules
That with a sherte his life did lese
And thus founde I sittyng this Goddesse
In noble honour and richesse
Of whiche I stinte a while now
Other thing to tellen you
Tho sawe I stande on thotherside
Streight doune to the doores wide
From the dees many a pillere
Of metall, that shone not full clere
But though thei were of no richesse
Yet were thei made for greate noblesse
And in hem greate sentence
And folke of hie and digne reuerence
Of whiche to tell will I fonde
Upon a piller sawe I stonde
Alderfirst there I sie
Upon a piller stonde on hie
That was of Lede and of Iron fine
Hym of the secte Saturnine
The Ebraike Josephus the old
That of Jewes gestes told
And he bare on his shulders hie
The fame up of the Jurie
And by hym stoden other seuen
Wise and worthie for to neuen
To helpe hym beare up the charge
It was so heauie and so large
And for thei written of battailes
As well as of other maruailes
Therefore was lo, this pillere
Of whiche I you tell here
Of Leade and Iron bothe i wis
For Iron Martes metall is
Whiche that God is of battaile
And the Leade withouten faile
Is lo, the metall of Saturne
That hath full large whele to tourne
To stande forthe on either rowe
Of hem, whiche I could knowe
Though I by order hem not tell
To make you to long to dwell
These, of whiche I gan rede
These sawe I stande out of drede
Upon an Iron piller strong
That painted was all endlong
With Tigres blood in euery place
The Tholason that height Stace
That bare of Thebes up the name

Upon his sholders, and the fame
Also of cruell Achilles
And by hym stode withouten lees
Full wonder hie upon a piller
Of Iron, he the greate Omer
And with him Dares and Titus
Before, and eke he Lollius
And Guido eke the Colempnis
And Englishe Galfride eke iwis
And eche of these as I haue ioye
Was busie to beare up Troye
So heauie thereof was the fame
That for to beare it was no game
But yet I gan full well espie
Betwine hem was a little enuie
One saied that Omer made lies
Feinyng in his Poetries
And was to the Grekes fauourable
Therefore held he it but fable
Tho sawe I stande on a pillere
That was of Tinned Iron clere
The Latine Poete Uirgile
That hath bore up a long while
The fame of Pius Eneas
And next hym on a piller was
Of Copper, Uenus clerke Ouide
That hath sowen wonders wide
The greate God of loues fame
And there he bare up well his name
Upon this piller also hie
As I might see it with myne ye
For why this hall whereof I rede
Was more on height, length, and brede
Well more by a thousande deale
Then it was erst, that sawe I weale
Tho sawe I on a piller by
Of Iron wrought full sternely
The greate Poete dan Lucan
That on his sholders bare up then
As hie as that I might see
The fame of Julius and Pompee
And by hym stoden all these clerkes
That write of Romes mightie werkes
That if I would her names tell
All to long must I dwell
And nexte hym on a piller stoode
Of Sulphure, liche as he were wood
Dan Claudian, lothe for to tell
That bare up all the fame of hell
Of Pluto, and of Proserpine
That Quene is of the derke pine
What should I more tell of this
The hall was all full iwis
Of hem that written old ieftes
As been on trees Rokes nestes
But it a full confuse mattere
Were all these ieftes for to here
That thei of write, and how thei height
But while that I beheld this sight
I herde a noise approchen bliue
That fareth as Bees doen in an hiue
Ayenst her tyme of out fliyng
Right soche a maner murmuryng
For all the worlde it semed me
Tho gan I looke about and see
That there come entryng into the hall
A right greate companie withall
And that of sondrie regions
Of all kins condicions
That dwell in yearth under the Moone
Poore and riche, and also sone
As thei were come into the hall
Thei gan on knees doune to fall
Before this ilke noble quene
And saied, graunt vs Ladie shene
Eche of vs thy grace abone
And some of hem she graunted sone
And some she warned well and faire
And some she graunted the contraire
Of her asking vtterlie
But this I saie you truelie
What her grace was I nist
For of these folke full well I wist
Thei had good fame eche deserued
Although thei were diuersly serued
Right as her sister dame Fortune
Is wont to serue in commune
Now herken how she gan to paie
Hem that gan her of grace praie
And yet lo, all this companie
Saiden sothe, and not a lie
Madame saied thei, we be
Folke that here beseechen thee
That thou graunt vs now good fame
And let our workes haue good name
In full recompensacion
Of good worke, giue vs good renoun
I warne it you (q she) anone
Ye get of me good fame none
By God, and therefore go your waie
Alas (q thei) and welawaie
Tell vs what your cause maie be
For me lifte it not (q she)
No wight shall speake of you iwis
Good ne harme, ne that ne this
And with that worde she gan to call
Her messenger that was in hall
And bad that he should fast goue
Upon pain to be blinde anone
For Eolus the God of winde

In Trace there ye shall hym finde
And bid hym bryng his clarioun
That is full diuers of his soun
And it is cleped cleare Laude
With whiche he wont is to heraude
Hem that me list ipraised be
And also bid hym hew that he
Bryng eke his other clarioun
That height Sclaunder in euery toune
With whiche he wont is to diffame
Hem that me list and doe hem shame
This messenger gan fast to gone
And founde where in a caue of stone
In a countree that height Trace
This Eolus with harde grace.
Held the Windes in distresse
And gan hem vnder hym to presse
That thei gone as the Beres roze
Ye bounde and pressed hem so soze
This messenger gan fast crie
Rise vp (q he) and fast thee hie
Till thou at my Ladie be
And take thy clarions eke with thee
And spede thee fast, and he anone
Tokē to one that highte Tritone
His clarions to bearen tho
And let a certain winde go
That blewe so hidously and hie
That it ne left not a skie
In all the welken long and brode
This Eolus no where abode
Till he was come to Fames fete
And eke the man that Triton hete
And there he stode as still as stone
And here withall there came anone
An other huge companie
Of good folke and gan to crie
Ladie, graunte vs now good fame
And let our wooikes haue that name
Now in honour of gentilnesse
And also God your soule blesse
For we han well deserued it
Therefore is right that we be quit
As thriue I (q she) ye shall faile
Good wooikes shall you not auaile
To haue of me good Fame as now
But wote ye what, I graunt yowe
That ye shall haue a shrewde name
And wicked loos, and worse fame
Though ye good loos haue well deserued
Now goeth your waie for ye been serued
And thou Dan Eolus (q she)
Take forthe thy trompe anone let se
That is icleped Sclaunder light
And blowe her loos, that euery wight
Speake of hem harme and shrewdnesse
In stede of good and worthinesse
For thou shalt trumpe all the contraire
Of that thei haue doen, well and faire.
Alas thought I what auentures
Haue these sorie creatures
That thei emong all the pres
Should thus be shamed giltles
But what, it must nedes be
What did this Eolus, but he
Tokē out his blacke trompe of brass
That fouler then the Deuill was
And gan this trompe for to blowe
As all the worlde should ouerthrowe
Throughout euery regioun
Went this foule trumpes soun
As swift as a pellet out of a gonne
When fire is in the pouder ronne
And soche a smoke gan out wende
Out of the foule trumpes ende
Blacke, blo, grenisshe, swartisshe, rede
As doeth where that men melte lede
Lo, all on hie from tewell
And thereto one thyng sawe I well
That the ferther that it ranne
The greater weren it beganne
As doeth the riuer from a well
And it stanke as the pitte of hell
Alas, thus was her shame irong
And giltlesse on euery tong
Tho came the thirde companie
And gone vp to the dees to hie
And doune on knees thei fell anone
And saiden, we been euerichone
Folke that han full truelie
Deserued fame rightfullie
And praied you it might be knowe
Right as it is and forthe blowe
I graunte (q she) for now me list
That your good wooikes shall be wist
And yet ye shall haue better loos
Right in dispite of all your foos
Then worthie is, and that anone
Let now (q she) thy trumpe gone
Thou Eolus, that is so blacke
And out thyne other troumpe take
That highte Laude, and blowe it so
That through the worlde her fame go
All easely and not to fast
That it be knowen at the last
Full gladly Ladie myne he saied
And out his trumpe of golde he braied
Anone, and set it to his mouthe
And blewe it East, West, and Southe
And Northe, as loude as any thonder

These

That euery wight hath of it wonder
So brode it ran or that it stent
And certes all the breath that went
Out of his trumpes mouthe smelde
As men a potte full of baume helde
Emong a basket full of roses
This fauour did he to her loses ¶
And right with this I gan espie
There came the fowerth companie
But certaine thei were wonder fewe
And gonne to standen on a rewe
And saiden, certes Ladie bright
We haue doen well with all our might
But we ne keepe to haue fame
Hide our workes and our name
For Goddes loue, for certes we
Haue surely doen it for bountee ¶
And for no maner other thyng
I graunt you all your askyng
(q she) let your workes be dedde
With that about I tourned my hedde
And sawe anone the fiueth rout
That to this Ladie gan lout
And doune on knees anone to fall
And to her tho besoughten all
To hiden her good workes eke
And saied, thei yeue not a leke
For no fame, ne soche renoun ¶
For thei for contemplacioun
And Goddes loue had it wrought
Ne of fame would thei nought.
What (q she) and be ye wood
And wene ye for to doe good
And for to haue of that no fame
Haue ye dispite to haue my name
Naie ye shall lien euerichone
Blowe thy trumpe and that anone
(q she) thou Eolus I hote
And ring these folkes workes by note
That all the worlde maie of it heare
And he gan blowe her loos so cleare
In his golden clarioun
Through the worlde went the soun
Also kindely, and eke so soft
That their fame was blowe a loft
Tho came the sixt companie
And gan fast to fame crie
Right verely in this manere ¶
Thei saiden, mercie Ladie dere
To tell certain as it is
We haue doen neither that ne this
But idell all our life hath be
But natheless yet praie we
That we maie haue as good a fame
And greate renoume and knowen name
As thei that haue doe noble iestes
And acheued all her questes
As well of loue as other thyng
All was vs neuer broche ne tyng
Ne els what fro women sent
Ne ones in her harte iment
To maken vs onely frendly chere
But mought temen vs on bere
Yet let vs to the people seme
Soche as the worlde maie of vs deme
That women louen vs for wood
It shall doe vs as moche good
And to our harte as moche auaile
The counterpeise, ease, and trauaile
As we had won with labour
For that is dere bought honour
At regard of our greate ease
And yet ye must vs more please
Let vs beholde eke thereto
Worthie, wise, and good also
And riche, and happie vnto loue
For Goddes loue that sitteth aboue
Though we maie not the bodie haue
Of women, yet so God me saue
Let men glewe on vs the name
Sufficeth that we haue the fame
I graunt (q she) by my trouth
Now Eolus withouten slouth
Take out thy trumpe of golde (q she)
And blowe as thei haue ashed me
That euery man wene hym at ease
Though thei go in full badde lease
This Eolus gan it so blowe
That through the worlde it was iknowe
Tho came the seuenth route anone
And fill on knees euerichone
And saied, Ladie graunte vs soone
The same thyng, the same boone
That this nexte folke haue done
Fie on you (q she) euerichone
Ye mastie swine, ye idle wretches
Full of rotten slowe tetches
What false theues, where ye wolde
Been famed good, and nothyng nolde
Deserue why, ne neuer thought
Men rather you to hangen ought
For ye be like the slepie Cat
That would haue fishe: but wost thou what?
He woll nothyng weate his clawes
Euill thrifte come to your iawes
And on myne if I it graunte
Or doe fauour you to auaunte.
Thou Eolus, thou hyng of Thrace
Go blowe this folke a sorie grace
(q she) anone, and wost thou how

As I shal tel the right nowe
Sey these ben they that wolde honour
Haue, and do no kins labour
Ne do no good, and yet haue laude
And that men wende that belle I laude
Ne coude hem not of loue werne
And yet the that grint at querne
Is al to good to ease her herte
This Eolus anone up sterte
And with his blacke clarioun
He gan to blasen out a soun
As loude as belleth winde in hel
And eke therwith sothe to tel
This sowne was so ful of iapes
As euer mowes were in apes
And that went al the worlde aboute
That euery wight gan on hem shoute
And for to laugh as they were wode
So che game founde they in her hode
Tho came another companye
That hadde ydone the trecherye
The harme and great wickednesse
That any herte couden gesse
And praied her to haue good fame
And that she nolde do hem no shame
But giue hem loos and good renoun
And do it blowe in clarioun
Nay wis (q she) it were a vyce
Al be there in me no iustice
We lyst not to do it nowe
Ne this I nil graunt it you
Tho came there leapinge in route
And gan clappen al aboute
Euery man vpon the crowne
That al the hal gan to sowne
And said, lady lefe and dere
We ben soche folkes as ye may here
To tel al the tale aright
We ben shrewes euery wight
And haue delite in wickednesse
As good folke haue in goodnesse
And ioye to ben knowen shrewes
And ful vice and wicked thewes
Wherfore we pray you on a rowe
That our fame be soche yknowe
In al thinges right as it is
I graunte it you (q she) ywis
But what arte thou that saiest this tale
That wearest on thy hose a pale
And on thy tippet soche a bel
Madame (q he) sothe to tel
I am that ylke shrewe ywis
That brent the temple of Isidis
In Athenes, lo that cyte
And wherfore diddest thou so (q she)
By my trouthe (q he) madame
I wolde faine haue had a name
As other folke had in the towne
Although they were of great renowne
For her vertue and her thewes
Thought I, as great fame haue shrewes
(Though it be nought) for shrewednesse
As good folke haue for goodnesse
And sithen I may not haue that one
That other nyl I not forgone
As for to get a fame here
The temple sette I al on fire
Nowe done our loos be blowe swithe
As wisly be thou euer blythe
Gladly (q she) thou Eolus
Herest thou not what they prayen vs
Madame yes, ful wel (q he)
And I will trumpen it parde
And toke his blacke trumpe fasse
And gan to puffen and to blasse
Eyl it was at the worldes ende
With that I gan aboute wende
For one that stode right at my bacche
Me thought ful goodly to me speache
And said, frende what is thy name
Arte thou come hider to haue fame
Nay for sothe frende (q I)
I come nat hither grant mercy
For no soche cause by my heed
Suffiseth me, as I were deed
That no wight haue my name in honde
I wot my selfe best howe I stonde
For what I drie, or what I thinke
I wol my selfe al it drinke
Certaine for the more parte
As ferforth as I can mine arte
What doest thou here than (q he)
(q I) that wol I tel the
The cause why I stande here
Some newe tidinges for to lere
Some newe thinge I not what
Tydinges eyther this or that
Of loue, or soche thinges glade
For certainly he that me made
To come hyder, said to me
I shulde bothe here and se
In this place wonder thinges
But these be no soche tidinges
As I ment of: No (q he)
And I answerde, no parde
For wel I wote euer yet
Sithe that firste I had wit
That some folke han desired fame
Diuersly, and loos and name
But certainly I nist how
Ne where that fame dwelled or nowe

Ne eke of her discripcion
Ne also her condicion
Ne the order of her dome
Knewe I not til I hider come
Why than be lo these tidinges
That thou nowe hether bringes
That thou haste herde (q̃ he) to me
But nowe no force, for wel I se
What thou desirest for to lere
Come forth and stande no lenger here
And I woll the without drede
In to soche another place lede
There thou shalte here many one
Tho gan I forthe with him gone
Out of the castel sothe to sey
Tho sawe I stande in a valey
Under the castel faste by
And house, that domus Dedali
That Laborintus ycleped is
Nas made so wonderly ywis
Ne halfe so quently ywrought
And euermo, as swifte as thought
This queint house aboute went
That neuermo it still stent
And there came out so great a noise
That had it stonde vpon Oyse
Men might haue hearde it easely
To Rome, I trowe sikerly
And the noise whiche that I herde
For al the worlde right so it ferde
As dothe the routinge of the stone
That fro thengin is letyn gone
And al this house of whiche I rede
Was made of twygges falowe rede
And grene eke, and some were white
Soche as men to the cages twhite
Or maken of these paniers
Or els hutches or dossers
That for the swough and for the twigges
This house was also ful of gigges
And also ful eke of chirkinges
And of many other workinges
And eke this house hath of entrees
As many as leues ben on trees
In sommer whan they bene grene
And on the rofe yet men may sene
A thousande holes, and wel mo
To letten the sowne out go
And by day in euery tyde
Ben al the dores open wide
And by night eche one vnshette
Ne porte is there none to lette
No maner tydinges in to pace
Ne neuer rest is in that place
That it nis filled full of tidinges
Eyther loude or of whisperinges
And euer al the houses angels
Is ful of rowninges and of iangles
Of werres, of peace, of mariages
Of restes, and of labour of viages
Of abode of deathe, and of lyfe
Of loue, of hate, accorde, of strife
Of losse, of lore, and of winninges
Of heale, of sickenesse, or of lesinges
Of faire wether, and eke of tempestes
Of qualme, of folke, and of beestes
Of diuers transmutacions
Of estates, and eke of regions
Of trust, of drede, of ialousy
Of witte, of winning, of foly
Of plenty, and of great famine
Of chepe, of derthe, and of ruine
Of good or misgouernement
Of fyre, and of diuers accident
And lo, this house of whiche I write
Syker be ye it nas not lite
For it was syxtie mile of length
Al was the tymber of no strength
Yet it is founded to endure
While that it lyste to Auenture
That is the mother of tidinges
As the see of welles and springes
And it was shapen lyke a cage
Certes (q̃ I) in al mine age
Ne sawe I soche an house as this
And as I wondred me ywis
Upon this house, tho ware was I
Howe myne Egle faste by
Was perched hye vpon a stone
And I gan streight to him gone
And said thus, I pray the
That thou a while abide me
For goddes loue, and let me sene
What wonders in that place bene
For yet paraunter I may lere
Some good therin, or somwhat here
That lefe me were, or that I went
Peter, that is nowe myne entent
(q̃ he to me) therfore I dwel
But certaine one thinge I the tel
That but I bring the therin
Ne shal thou neuer conne the gin
To come in to it, out of doute
So faste it whirleth lo aboute
But sithe that Joues of his grace
As I haue said, wil the solace
Finally with these thinges
Unconthe sightes and tidinges
To passe with thine euinesse
Soche routhe hath he of thy distresse
That thou suffredest debonairly
And woste they seluen vtterly

Desperate of al blisse
Sithe that fortune hath made a misse
The swote of al thine hertes rest
Languische, and eke in pointe to brest
But he through his mightie melite
Wil do the ease, al be it lite
And gaue in expresse commaundement
To whiche I am obedient
To forther the with al my myght
And wisshe and teche the aright
Where thou maiste most tidinges here
Thou shalte here many one lere
With this worde he right anone
Hent me vp betwene his tone
And at a windowe in me brought
That in this house was, as me thought
And there withal me thought it stent
And nothinge it aboute went
And me set in the floore adoun
But sothe a great congregacion
Of folke, as I sawe rome about
Some within and some without
Nas neuer sene, ne shal be ette
That certes in this worlde nis lette
So many formed by nature
Ne deed so many a creature
That wel vnneth in that place
Had I a foote brede of space
And euery wight that I sawe there
Rowned eueriche in others eere
A newe tidinge priuely
Or els he tolde it al openly
Right thus, and said:Ost nat thou
That is betidde, lo right nowe
Nay (quod he) tel me what
And than he tolde him this and that
And swore therto, that it was sothe
Thus hath he said, and thus he dothe
And this shal be, and thus herde I say
That shal be founde, that dare I lay
That al the folke that is on lyue
Ne haue the konninge to discriue
Tho thinges that I herde there
What a loude, and what in eere
But al the wonder moste was this
Whan one had herde a thinge y wis
He came streight to another wight
And gan him tellen anone right
The same that him was tolde
Or it a forlonge way was olde
And gan somwhat for to eche
To this tiding in his speche
More than euer it spoken was
And nat so sone departed nas
Tho fro him that he ne mette
With the thirde, and er he lette
Any stounde, he tolde him alse
Were the tidinges sothe or false
Yet wolde he tel it natheles
And euer more with mo encrees
Than it was erst: thus north and south
Went euery tiding, fro mouth to mouthe
And that encreasinge euermo
As fire is wont to quicken and go
From a sparcle sprongen amis
Tyl al a cite brent vp is
And whan that was ful vp spronge
And waxen more on euery tonge
Than euer it was, and went anone
Vp to a windowe out to gone
Or but it might out there passe
It gan out crepe at some creuasse
And flewe forthe faste for the nones
And somtyme I sawe there at ones
A leasing, and a sadde sothe sawe
That gonnen of auenture drawe
Out at a windowe for to pace
And whan they metten in that place
They were achecched bothe two
And neither of hem myght out go
For eche other they gonne so croude
Tyl eche of hem gan crien loude
Let me gone first, nay but let me
And here I wol ensuren the
With nones that thou wolt do so
That I shal neuer fro the go
But be thin owne swore brother
We wol meddle vs eche in other
That no man be he neuer so wrothe
Shal haue one two, but bothe
At ones, as beside his leue
Come we a morowe or on eue
Be we crede or fyl yrowned
Thus sawe I falle and sothe compowned
Togider flye for o tidinge
Thus out at holes gonne wringe
Euery tiding streight to fame
And she gan yeue eche his name
After her disposicion
And yeue hem eke duracion
Some to were and wane soone
As dothe the faire white moone
And let hem gonne, there might I seen
Winged wonders fast flien
Twenty thousande in a route
As Eolus hem blewe aboute
And lorde this house in al times
Was ful of shypmen and pilgrimes
With scrippes brette ful of leasinges
Entermelled with tidinges

And eke alone by hem selue
O many thousande tymes twelue
Sawe I eke of these pardoners
Currours, and eke messaungers
with boxes crommed ful of lyes
As euer vessel was with lies
And as I aither fastest went
Aboute, and dyd al myne entent
We for to playen and for to lere
And eke a tiding for to here
That I had herde of some countre
That shal not nowe be tolde for me
For it no nede is redyly
Folke can singe it bet than I
For al mote out late or rathe
Al the sheues in the rathe
I herde a great noise withall
In a corner of the hal
There men of loue tydinges tolde
And I gan thiderwarde beholde
For I sawe renninge euery wight
As faste as that they hadden might
And euerych cride, what thinge is that
And some said I not neuer what
And whan they were al on an hepe
Tho behinde gonne vp lepe
And clamben vp on other faste
And vp the noise on hyghen caste
And reden fast on others heles
And stampe as men done after eles
At the laste I sawe a man
Whiche that I nought ne can
But he semed for to be
A man of great auctorite
And there withal I abraide
Out of my slepe halfe a fraide
Remembringe wel what I had sene
And howe hye and ferre I had bene
In my goost, and had great wonder
Of that the god of thonder
Had let me knowen, and began to write
Lyke as ye haue herde me endite
Wherfore to study and rede alway
I purpose to do day by day
Thus in dreaminge and in game
Endeth this litel booke of Fame.

Here endeth the booke
of Fame.
):(

The Prologue of the testament

of Loue.

MAny men there ben, that with eeres openly spradd so moche swalowen the deliciousnesse of iestes and of ryme, by queynt knittinge coloures, that of the goodnesse or of the badnesse of the sentence, take they litel hede or els none.

Sothelye dulle witte and a thoughtfull soule so sore haue mined and graffed in my spirites, that soche craft of enditinge woll nat ben of mine acquaintaunce. And for rude wordes and boistous percen the herte of the herer to the inrest point, and plante there the sentence of thinges, so that with litel helpe it is able to spring. This booke that nothynge hath of the great floode of wytte, ne of semelyche colours, is doluen with rude wordes and boistous, & so drawe togider to maken the calthers therof ben the more redy to hent sentence.

Some men there ben, that painten with colours riche and some with vers, as with red inke, and some with coles and chalke: And yet is there good matter to the leude people of thylke chalkye purtreyture, as hem thinketh for the tyme, and afterward the syght of the better colours yeue hem more ioye for the first leudenesse. So sothly this leude clowdy occupacyon is not to prayse, but by the leude for comenly leude leudenesse commendeth. Eke it shal yeue right that other precyous thynges shall be the more in reuerence. In latin and french hath many souerayne wittes had great delyte to endite, and haue many noble thiges fulfilde, but certes there ben some that speaken their poisye mater in frenche, of whiche speche the frenche men haue as good a fantasye as we haue in heryng of frenche mens Englishe. And many termes ther ben in Englyshe, whiche vnneth we Englishe men connen declare the knowleginge: How should than a frenche man borne, soche termes conne iumpere in his matter, but as the Jay chatereth Englishe. Right so truely the vnderstandyng of Englishmen woll not

stretche

stretche to the priuye termes in Frenche, what so euer wee bolten of straunge langage. Let than clerkes enditen in latin, for they haue the propertie of science, and the knowinge in that faculte: and lette Frenchemen in their Frenche also enditen their queinte termes, for it is kyndely to their mouthes, and let vs shewe our fantasies in soche wordes as we lerneden of our dames tonge. And although this booke be lytel thank worthy for the leudnesse in trauail, yet soch writing exiten men to thilke thinges that ben necessarie: for euery mā therby may as by a perpetual myrrour sene the vices or vertues of other, in whyche thynge lightly may be conceiued to eschewe perils, and necessaries to catch, after as auētures haue fallen to other people or persons.

Certes the souerainst thinge of desire and most creature reasonable, haue or els shuld haue full appetite to their perfectyon: vnreasonable beestes mowen not, sithe reasō hath in hem no workinge: Than reasonable that wol not, is comparisoned to vnreasonable, and made lyke hem. For sothe the most soueraine and finall perfection of mā is in knowynge of a sothe, withouten any entent deceiuable, and in loue of one very God, that is inchaungeable, that is to knowe, and loue his crearure.

Nowe principally the mean e to bringe in knowleging and louynge his creatour, is the consideracyon of thynges made by the creatour, wherthrough be thylke thinges that ben made, vnderstandynge here to our wyttes, arne the vnsene priueties of God made to vs syghtfull an knowinge, in our contemplacion and vnderstondinge.

These thinges than forsoth moche bringen vs to the ful knowlegynge sothe, and to the parfyte loue of the maker of heuenly thynges. Lo Dauid saith: thou hast delited me in makinge, as who saith, to haue delite in the tune how God hath lent me in consideracion of thy makinge. Wherof Aristotle in the boke de Animalibus, saith to naturell philosophers: it is a greate libynge in loue of knowing their creatoure: and also in knowinge of causes inkindelye thynges considred. For sothe the formes of kindelye thinges and the shap, a great kyndely loue me shulde haue to the werkmā that hem made. The crafte of a werkman is shewed in the werk. Herefore trulie ỹ philosophers with a lyuely studie manie noble thinges, righte precious and worthy to memorye writen, and by a great swetande trauaille to vs left ten of causes the properties in natures of thinges, to whiche therfore Philosophers it was more ioy, more lykinge, more herty lust in kindely vertues and matters of reason the perfection by busy study to knowe, than to haue had all the treasour, al the richesse, al the vaineglory that the passed Emperours, Princes, or Kinges hadden. Therfore the names of hem in the booke of perpetuall memorie in vertue and peace arne writen, and in the contrarie, that is to saine, in tyre the foule pitte of helle arne thilke pressed that soch goodnes hated. And bicause this booke shall be of loue, and the prime causes of stering in that doinge with passions and diseases for wantinge of desire, I wil that this booke be cleped the Testament of Loue.

But nowe thou reder, who is thilke that will not in scorne laughe, to here a dwarfe or els halfe a man, say he wil rende out the swerde of Hercules handes. And also he shulde set Hercules gades a mile yet ferther, and ouer that he had power of strēgth to pull vp the spere, that Alisander the noble might neuer wagge.

And that passinge al thinge to ben mayster of Fraunce by might, there as the noble gracious Edwarde the thirde for al his great prowesse in victories ne might al yet conquere.

Certes I wote well, ther shall be made more scorne and iape of me, that I so vnworthely clothed al togither in the cloudie cloude of vncōning, wil putten me in prees to speke of loue, or els of the causes in that matter, sithē al the grettest clerkes hā had ynough to dou, & as who saith gathered vp clene to forne hem, and with their sharp sithes of cōning al mowē and made therof great rekes & noble, ful of al plenties to fed me and many another. Enuye forsothe cōmendeth noughte his reason, that he hath in hain, be it neuer so trusty. And al though these noble repers, as good worthmē & worthy their hier, han al draw & bounde vp in the sheues, & made many shockes, yet haue I ensample to gader the smale crōmes, and fullin my walet of tho that fallen from the bourde amōg the smalle hounes, notwithstandinge the trauaile of the almoigner, ỹ hath draw vp in ỹ cloth al ỹ remissailes, as trenchours, & the relief to here to ỹ almesse.

yet also haue I leue of the noble husbande Boece, all though I be a straunger of conninge to come after his doctrine, and these great workmen, and glene my handfuls of the shedynge after their handes, and yf me faile ought of my ful, to encrease my porciō with that I shal drawe by priuyties out of shockes, a slye seruaunte in his owne helpe is often moche commended, knowynge of trouthe in causes of thynges, was more hardier in the firste sechers; and so sayth Aristotle, and lighter in vs that han folowed after. For their passing study han fresshed our wittes; and oure vnderstandynge han excited in consideracion of trouth by sharpenes of their reasons. Utterly these thinges be no dremes ne iapes, to throwe to hogges, it is lykelych meate for childzen of trouth, and as they me betiden whan I pilgramed out of my kith in wintere, whā the wether out of measure was boistous, & the wyld wind Borias as his kind asketh with dryinge coldes, maked the wawes of ỹ occian see so to arise vnbindely ouer the commune bankes that it was in point to spill all the erthe.

Thus endeth the prologue, and here after soloweth the first boke of the Testament of Loue.

The testament

of loue.

ALas Fortune alas, I that some tyme in delicious houres was wont to enioy blisful stoūdes, am nowe dryue by vnhappy heuinesse to bewaile my sondrie yuels in tene. Trewlie I leue, in myn herte is writte of perdurable letters al the entencyons of lamētacion that now ben ymempned, for any mans disease outward in sobbyng maner, sheweth sorowful perynge from within. T[illegible] from my comfort I ginne to spille, sith she that shulde me solace, is ferre fro my presence. Certes her absence is to me an hell, my sternynge death thus in wo it myneth, that endelesse care is throughout myne harte clenched, blysse of my ioye, that ofte me murthed is turned into galle, to thynke on thing that may not at my wil in armes me hēt. Mirth is chaunged in to tene, whā swink is there continually, that rest was wōt to soiourne and haue dwellynge place. Thus witlesse thoughtfull, sightlesse lokynge, I endure my penaunce in this derke prisonne, caitifned fro frēdshippe and acquaintaunce, and forsaken of al that any worde dare speake. Straūge hath by way of intrucioun made his home there me shulde be, yf reason were herde as he shulde. Neuer the later yet hertly lady precyous Margarit, haue minde on thy seruaunte, and thynke on his disease, howe lightles he lyueth, sithe the beames brēnende in loue of thin eien arn so bewet, that worldes a cloude atwene vs twey wol not suffre my thoughtes of hem to be enlumyned. Thinke that one vertue of a Margarite precious, is amonges manye other the sorowful to comfort, yet wil of that me sorowfull to comforte, is my luste to haue nought els at this tyme, deede ne death, ne no maner traueylle hath, no power myne hert so moche to fade, as shulde to here of a twincklinge in your disease. Ah, God forbede that, but yet lete me dey, let me sterue withouten any measure of penaunce, rather than myne hertely thinking comforte in ought were diseased. What may my seruice aueile in absence of her, that my seruice shulde accepte? is this nat endelesse

sorowe

sorowe to thinke: yes, yes God wote, myne hart breaketh nie a sonder, how should the ground wout kindly noriture, bringē forth any fruites: How should a ship withoten a sterne in ỹ great sea be gouerned: how shold I withouten my blisse, my harte, my desire, my ioye, my goodnesse, endure in this contrarious prison, that thinke euery houre in the daie, an hundred winter: wel maie now Eue sain to me Adam, in sorowe fallen frō wealthe, driuen art thou out of Paradise, with sweate thy sustenaunce to be swinke. Depe in this pinyng pitte, with wo I ligge istocked, with chaines linked of care, and of tene. It is so hie from thens I lie, and the common yerth, there ne is table in no land maked, that might stretche to me, to drawe me into blisse, ne steyers to steye on is none, so that without recouer endlesse, here to endure I wote well I purueide. O, where art thou nowe frendship, that sometyme with laughande chere, madest bothe face & countenaunce to me wardes? Truely nowe arte thou wente out of toune, but euer me thinketh, he weareth his olde clothes, and that the soule, in the whiche the life of frendship was in, is drawē out frō his other spirites. Now then farewell frendship, and farewell felawes, me thinketh ye all han taken your leaue: no force of you all at ones.

But ladie of loue, ye wote what I mean, yet think on thy seruaunt, that for thy loue spilleth, all thynges haue I forsake, to folowē thine hestes: reward me with a thought though ye doe naught els. Remembraunce of loue, lith so sore vnder my breste, that other thought cometh not in my mynde, but gladnesse to thinke on your goodnesse, and your merie chere, frendes & sorowe, to think on your wretche and your daunger, from whiche Christ me saue. My greate ioye it is to haue in meditacions, the bounties, the vertues, the nobley in you printed: sorowe and yel comen at ones, to suppose that I be veined. Thus with care, sorowe, & tene am I shapt, min ende with death to make. Now good goodly thinke on this.

O wretched foole that I am fallen into so lowe, the heate of my brenning tene hath me all defaced: how should ye Lady set prise on so foule filth: My conning is thinne, my witte is exiled, like to a foole naturell, am I comparisoned. Truely ladie, but your mercie the more were. I wote well all my labor were in idell: your mercie thā palleth right. God graunt that propolicion to be verified in me, so that by trust of good hope, I nowe come to the hauen of ease, and sith it is impossible, the colours of youre qualities to chaunge: and forsoth I wote well, wemme ne spot maie not abide, there so noble vertue habouūdeth, so ỹ the defalying to you is verily imaginable, as coūtenāce of goodnes ẅ encreasig vertue, is so in you knit to abid by necessarie maner, yet if the riuers might fal, which is ayenst kinde, I woll well myn hart, ne should therefore naught slit, by the lesse poinct of Geometrie, so sadlie is it sonded, that awaie from your seruice in loue, maie he not departe. O loue, when shall I been pleased? O charitie, when shall I been eased? O good goodlie, when shall the Dice tourne? O full of vertue, doe the chaunce of comforte, vpwarde to fall. O loue, when wolt thou think on thy seruaunt? I can no more, but here out cast of all welfare, abide the daie of my death, or els to see the light ỹ might all my wellynge sorowes voide, and of the floode make an ebbe. These diseases mowen well by duresse of sorowe, make my life to vnbodie, and so for to die: but certes, ye ladie in a full perfeccion of loue, been so knitte with my soule, that death maie not thilke knotte vnbinde ne departe, so that ye and my soulle together is endlesse, in blisse should dwel, and there shall my soule at the full been eased, that he maie haue your presence, to shewe the entent of his desires: Ah dere God, that shall bee a greate ioye. Now yearthlie Goddesse, take regarde of thy seruaunt, though I be feble, for thou art wōte to praise them better, that would con serue in loue, all be he full meaner then kinges or princes, that woll not haue that vertue in minde. Now precious Margarite, that with thy noble vertue, hast drawen me into loue firste, me wenyng thereof to haue blisse, as Galle and Aloes are so moche sprong, that sauour of sweetenesse maie I not atast. Alas that your benigne iyen, in which that mercie semeth, to haue all his noriture, nill by no waie tourne the clerenesse of mercie to mewardes. Alas that your brennande vertues, shinyng emonges all folke, and enluminyng all other people, by habundaunce of encreasyng, sheweth to me but smoke, & no light. These thinges to thinke in myne harte, maketh euery daie wepyng in myne iyen to renne. These liggen on my backe so sore, that importable burden me semeth on

me backe to be charged, it maketh me backwarde to meue, when my steppes by comon course euen forthe pretende: These thynges also on right side and lefte, haue me so enuolued with care, that wanhope of helpe is throughout me ronne truelie, and leue that graceleſſe is my Fortune, whiche that euer sheweth it mewardes by a Cloudie disease, all readie to make stormes of tene, and the blisfull side halte still awaiward, and woll it not suffer to mewardes to turne: no force yet woll I not been conquered.

O, alas that your nobley so moche emōg all other creatures, cōmended by folowyng streme, by al maner vertues, but there been wonderfull, I not whiche that let the flood to come into my soul, wherfore purely mated with sorowe through sought, my self I crie on your goodnes, to haue pitee on this caitife, that in the inrest degree of sorowe and disease is left, and without your goodlie will, from any help and recouery. These sorowes maie I not susteine, but if my sorowe should bee tolde, and to you wardes shewed, although moche space is betwene vs twaine, yet me thynketh that by soche soleinyng woordes, my disease ginneth eb. Truelie me thynketh that the soune of my lamentacious wepyng, is right now flowe into youre presence, and there crieth after mercie and grace, to whiche thynge me semeth, thee lifte none answere to yeue, but with a deinous chere, ye commaunded it to auoide, but God forbidde that any woorde should of you spryng, to haue so little ruth. Parde pitie and mercie, in euery Margarit is closed by kinde, emongs many other vertues, by qualities of comforte, but comfort is to me right naught worthe, withouten mercie and pitie of you alone, whiche thinges hastly God me graunt for his mercie.

Thearsing these things and many other, without time or moment of rest, me semed for anguishe of disease, that all togither I was rauished, I can not tell how, but holly al my passions and felynges weren lofte, as it semed for the time, and sodainly a maner of dreade, light in me al at ones, nought soche feare as folke haue of an enemie, that were mightie, and would hem greue, or dooen hem disease: for I trowe this is wel knowe to many persones, that otherwhile if a mā be in his Soueraines presence, a maner of ferdnesse crepeth in his hart, not for harme, but of goodlie subiection: namelie as men reden that Aungelles been aferde of our sauiour in heauen. And parde there ne is, ne maie no passion of disease bee, but it is to meane, that Aungelles been a dradde, not by frendes of drede, sithen thei been perfitly blisled, as affeccion of wonderfulnes, and by seruice of obedience, soche ferde also han these louers in presence of their loues, and subiectes afore their soueraines: right so with ferdnesse, mine hart was caught. And I sodainlie astonied, there entered into the place, there I was lodged a ladie, the semeliche and moste goodlie to my sight, that euer to forne appeared to any creature, and trulie in the blustring of her looke, she yaue gladnesse and comforte, sodainly to all my wittes, & right so she doeth to euery wight, that cometh in her presēce. And for she was so goodlie (as me thought) mine harte begā somedeale to be enbolded, and wext a little hardie to speake, but yet with a quakynge voice, as I durst, I salued her, and enquired what she was, and why she so worthie to sight, dained to enter into so foule a dongeon, and namely a prison, without leaue of my kepers. For certes, although the vertue of deedes of mercie, stretchen to visiten the poore prisoners, and hem after that faculties been had to comforte, me semed that I was so ferre fallen into miserie & wretched hid caitifnesse, that me should no precious thing neigh: and also that for my sorowe euery wight should been heauie, & wilsche my recouery. But whē this lady had somedeale apperceiued, as well by my woordes, as by my chere, what thought busied me within with a good womanlie countenaunce, she said these wordes. O my norie, weneſt thou that my maner bee, to forget my frendes, or my seruauntes? Naie (q she) it is my full entent, to visite and comfort all my frendshippes and alies, as well in tyme of perturbacion, as of moste propertie of blisse, in me shall vnkindnesse neuer be founden. And also sithen I haue so fewe especial true, now in these daies, wherfore I maie well at more leisar, come to hem that me deseruen, and if my comyng maie in any thyng auaile, wete well I woll come often.

Now good ladie (q I) that art so faire on to loke, rinyng honie by thy woordes, blisse of paradise arne thy lokynges, ioye and cōfort

fort are thy mouinges. What is thy name? How is it that in you is so mokell werking vertues enpight, as me semeth, and in non other creature, that euer sawe I with mine yen? My disciple (q she) me wondreth of thy wordes, and on thee, that for a little disease hast foryeten my name. Wost thou not well that I am Loue, that firste thee brought to thy seruice? O good Ladie (q I) is this worshipp to thee, or to thyne excellēce, for to come into so foule a place? Parde somtime tho I was in prosperitie, and with forain goodes enuolued, I had mokil to doen to draw thee to mine hostell, & yet many werninges thou madest, ere thou liste fullie to graunt, thine home to make at my dwelling place: & now thou comest goodlie by thine owne bise, to comfort me with words, & so there through I ginne remember, on passed gladnes. Trulie ladie I ne wot, whether I shall saie welcome or none, sithen thy commyng woll as moche doe me tene and sorowe, as gladnesse and mirthe: se why. For that me comforteth to thinke on passed gladnesse, that me anoyeth eft to be in doing. Thus thy comming both gladdeth and teneth, and that is cause of moche sorowe: lo Ladie, how then I am comforted by your conning, and with that I gan in teares to distill, & tenderlie wepe. Now certes (q Loue) I se well (and that me ouerthinketh) that wit in thee faileth, and art in poinct to dote. Trulie (q I) that haue ye maked, and that euer wol I rue. Wottest thou not well (q she) that euery Shepherde ought by reasō, to seke his sperkeland shepe that arne ron into wildernesse, emong bushes and perils, and hem to their pasture ayen bryng, and take of hē priuie bustie cure on keping? And tho the vnconning Shepe, scattred would been lost, renning to wilder nesse, and to desertes drawe, or els woulden put hem self to the swallowyng wolfe, yet shall the Shepherde, by businesse and trauaile, so put him forthe, that he shall not let him be lost by no waie. A good shepherd putteth rather his life to been lost for his shepe

But for thou shalt not wene me, being of werse condicion, truelie for eueriche of my folke, and for all tho that to me warde, bee knit in any condicion, I woll rather die thā suffre hem through errour to been spilte. For me liste, and it me liketh, of all myne a Shepherdesse to bee cleaped. Wost thou not well, I failed neuer wight, but he me refused, and would negligētlie go with vnkindenesse? And yet parde, haue I many soche holpe and releued, and thei haue ofte me begiled, but euer at thende, it discēded in their owne neckes. Haste thou not radde, howe hinde I was to Paris, Priamus soonne of Troie? How Jason me failed, for al his fals behest? How Sefars sonne, I lette it for no tene, till he was troned in my blisse, for his seruice. What (q she) moste of all, maked I not a louedaie, bitwene God and mankind; and chese a maide to be nompere, to but the quarell at ende? Lo, how I haue trauailed to haue thanke on all sides, and yet list me not to reste, and I might finde on whom I should werche. But trulie mine owne disciple, bicause I haue thee founde at all assais in thy will to bee redie, mine hestes to haue followed, and haste been true to that Margarite Perle, that ones I thee shewed, and she alwaie ayenward, hath made but daungerous chere, I am come in proper persone to put thee out of errours, & make thee glad by waies of reason, so that sorow ne disease shal, no more hereafter the amaistrie. Wher through I hope, thou shalt lightlie come to the grace, that thou longe haste desired, of thilke Jewell. Haste thou not heard many ensamples, how I haue comforted, and releued ỹ scholers of my lore? Who hath worthied kinges in the felde? Who hath honoured ladies in boure, by a perpetuall mirror of their truth in my seruice? Who hath caused worthie folke, to voide vice and shame? Who hath holde citees, and realmes in prosperitie? If thee list clepe ayen thyne old remembraunce, thou coudest euery poincte of this declare in especiall, and saie that I thy maistres haue be cause, caulyng these thinges, and many mo other.

Now iwis madame (q I) all these things I knowe well my self, and that thyne excellence, passeth the vnderstandyng of vs beastes, and that no mannes witte yearthlie, maie comprehende thy vertues. Well then (q she) for I see thee in disease and sorowe, I wote well thou art one of myne norries, I maie not suffer thee so to make sorowe, thin owne self to shende: but I my self come to be thy fere, thine heuy charge to make to seme the lesse, for wo is him that is a loue: And to the sory to been moued by a sorowfull wizt it is great gladnes. Right so with my sicke frendes I am sicke, and with sorie, I can not els but sorowe make, till when I haue hem releued, in soche wise that gladnesse in

a maner of counterpaiſyng, ſhall reſtore as moſell in ioye, as ſ paſſed heuineſſe biforne did in tene. And alſo (q ſhe) when any of my ſeruauntes been a lone in ſolitarie place, I haue yet euer buſied me to be with hem, in comfort of their hartes, and taught hem to make ſonges of plainte and of bliſſe, and to enditen letters of Rhetorike, in queint vnderſtādinges, and to bethinke hem in what wiſe, thei might beſte their Ladies in good ſeruice pleaſe, and alſo to learne maner in countenaunce, in wordes, and in bearyng, and to been meke & lowlie to euery wight, his name and fame to encreaſe, and to yeue greate yeftes and large, that his renome maie ſpryngen, but thee thereof haue I excuſed, for thy loſſe and thy greate coſtages, where through thou arte neadie, arne nothing to me vnknowen, but I hope to God ſometime it ſhal been amended, as thus, as I ſaied. In norture haue I taught al mine, and in curteſie made hem expert, their Ladies hartes to winne, and if any would endeinous, or proude, or be enuious, or of wrecches acquaintaunce, haſteliche haue ſoche boided out of my ſchole: for all vices truelie I hate: vertues and worthineſſe in all my power I auaunce.

Ah worthie creature (q I) and by iuſte cauſe, the name of Goddes dignely ye mow beare: in thee lithe the grace, through whiche any creature in this worlde hath any goodneſſe, truly all maner of bliſſe, and preciouſneſſe in vertue out of thee ſpringen, and weilen, as broobes and riuers, proceaden from their ſprynges, and like as all waters by kinde, drawen to the ſea, ſo all kindly thinges threſten, by ful appetite of deſire to drawe after thy ſteppes, and to thy preſence aproche, as to their kindlie perfeccion how dare then beaſtes in this world, aught forfete ayenſt thy Diuine purueighaunce? Alſo lady ye knowen all the priuie thoughtes, in hartes no counſaile maie been hidde from your knowyng. Wherfore I wote wel Ladie, that ye knowe your ſelf, that I in my conſcience am, and haue been willyng to your ſeruice, all coude I neuer dooe as I ſhould, yet forſothe fained I neuer to loue otherwiſe, then was in myne harte: and if I coud haue made chere to one, and ithought an other, as many other dooen aldaie afore myne iyen, I trowe it would not me haue vailed. Certes (q ſhe) haddeſt thou ſo dooen, I would not now haue thee here viſited, ye wete well Ladie ehe (q I) that I haue not plaid raket, Nettle in, Docke out, and with the weathercocke waued, and truely there ye me ſette, by accorde of my conſcience, I would not flie, till ye and reaſon by aperte ſtrength, maden myne harte to tourne.

In good faithe (q ſhe) I haue knowe thee euer of tho condicions, & ſithen thou wouldeſt (in as moche as in thee was) a made me priuie of thy counſaill, and iudge of thy cōſcience, though I forſoke it in tho daies, till I ſawe better my tyme, would neuer God that I ſhould now faile, but euer I woll be readie, witneſſyng thy ſothe, in what place that euer I ſhall, ayenſt al tho that woll the contrary ſuſtein, and for as moche as to me is naught vnknowen, ne hid of thy priuie harte, but all haſte thou tho thynges, made to me open at the full, that hath cauſed my comyng into this priſon, to voide the webbes of thine iyen, to make thee clerely to ſee the errours thou haſte been in, and bicauſe that men been of diuers condictons, ſome a dradde to ſaie a ſothe, and ſome for a ſothe anone readie to fight, and alſo that I maie not my ſelf been in place, to withſaie thilke men, that of thee ſpeaken, otherwiſe then the ſothe, I woll and charge thee, in vertue of obedience, that thou to me owelt, to writen my wordes, and ſet hem in writynges, that thei nowe as my witneſſyng, been noted emong the people. For bookes written, neither dreden ne ſhamen, ne ſtrue conne, but onely ſhewen the entente of the writer, and yeue remembraunce to the hearer: and if any woll in thy preſence ſaie, any thinge to tho writers, looke boldlie, truſt on Mars to anſwere at the ful. For certes, I ſhal him enforme of all the trouthe in thy loue, with thy cōſcience, ſo that of his helpe thou ſhalt not barie at thy nede. I trowe the ſtrongeſt and the beſt that maie bee founde, woll not tranſuers thy wordes, whereof then wouldeſt thou drede.

Greatlie was I tho gladded of theſe wordes, & as who ſaith, weren ſondele light in hart, both for thaucthoritie of witneſſe, and alſo of liberneſſe of helpe of the forſaied beheſte, and ſaid. Truely ladie now am a well gladded, through comforte of your wordes: be it now likyng vnto your nobly to ſhewe, whiche folke diffame your ſeruantes, ſith your

ſeruice

seruice oughte aboue all other thynges to been commended. Yet (q she) I see well thy soule is not al out of the amased cloude: the were better to heare thing, that thee might light out of thyne heauie charge, and after knowyng of thyne own helpe, then to stirre swete woordes, and soche reasons to heare: for in a thoughtfull soule (and namely soch one as thou art) woll not yet soche thinges sinken. Come of therefore, and let me seen thy heuie charge, that I maie the lightlier for thy comfort purueigh.

Now certes ladie (q I) the moste comfort I might haue, were vtterlie to wete me bee sure in hartes, of that Margarite I serue, and so I thinke to doen with all mightes, while my life dureth. Then (q she) maiest thou thereafter, in soche wise that mispleasaunce ne entre? In good faithe (q I) there shall no mispleasaunce be caused, through trespace on my side. And I dooe thee to weten (q she) I sette neuer yet persone to serue in no place (but if he caused the contrary, in defaultes and trespaces) that he ne sped of his seruice. Myne owne yearthly ladie (q I tho) and yet remember to your worthinesse how long sithen by many reuoluyng of yeres, in tyme when October, his leaue ginneth take, and Nouember sheweth hym to sight, when Bernes been full of goodes, as is the Nutte on euery halke, and then good londe tillers, ginneth shape for the yearth, with greate trauaile to bryng forthe more Corne, to mannes sustenaunce, ayenste the next yeres folowing. In soche tyme of plentie, he that hath an home, and is wise, liste not to wander meruailes to seche, but he be constrained or excited: oft the lothe thing is doen, by excitacion of other mannes opinion, whiche woulden faine haue myne abidyng, take in harte of luste to trauaile, and see the windyng of the yearth, in that tyme of Winter, by woodes that large streates werne in, by small pathes, that swine and hogges hadden made, as lanes with ladels their maste to seche, I walked thinkyng alone, a wonder greate while, and the greate beastes that the woode haunten, and adorneth al maner forestes, and heerdes gone to wilde: then ere I was ware, I neighed to a sea banke, and for ferde of the beastes, shipcraft I cride: for ladie I trowe ye wete well your self, nothyng is werse then the beastes that shoulden been tame, if thei catche her wildenesse, and ginne again waxe ramage: thus forsothe was I a ferde, and to Shippe me hied. Then were there inowe to lache myne handes, and drawe me to Shippe, of whiche many I knewe well the names. Sight was the firste, Luste was an other, Thought was the thirde, and Will ehe was there a Master: these broughten me within borde, of this Shippe of traueile. So when the saile was spradd, and this Shippe gan to moue, the Winde and Water gan for to rise, and ouertwharthe to tourne the welken, the wawes semeden as thei hilte togither, but often vnder colour of hilling, is mokell olde hate priuelie closed and kepte. The storme so straungelie, and in a deuouryng maner, ganne so fast vs assaile, that I supposed the date of my death, should haue made there his ginning, now vp, now doun nowe vnder the wawe, and nowe abouen was my Shippe a greate while. And so by mokell duresse of weathers, and of stormes, and with greate auowyng pilgrimages, I was driuen to an Ile, where vtterlie I wed firste to haue be rescowed, but truelie as the firste beginnyng, it semed me so perillous, the hauen to catch, that but through grace I had been comforted, of life I was full dispaired. Truelie Ladie, if ye remember a right of all maner thynges, your self came hastelie to seen vs sea driuen, and to weten what we weren: but firste ye were deinous of chere, after whiche ye gon better alight, and euer as me thought, ye liued in greate drede of disease, it seemed so by your chere. And when I was certified of your name, the lenger I looked in you, the more I you goodlie dradde, and euer myne harte on you opened the more, and so in a little tyme, my Shippe was out of mynde. But ladie as ye me lad I was ware, bothe of beastes and of fishes, a greate nomber throngyng togider: emong whiche a Muskell in a blewe shell, had enclosed a Margarite Perle, the moste precious, and best that euer tofore came in my sighte, and ye tolden your self, that ilke iewell in his hinde, was so good and so vertuous, that her better should I neuer finde, all sought I thereafter to the worldes ende, and with that I helde my peace a greate while: and euer sithē I haue me bethought on the man, that sought the precious Margarites, and when he had founden one to his likyng, he solde all his good to buy that iewell: I wis thought I, and yet so I think, now haue I founden the iewell, that mine

harte

harte desireth, whereto should I seche further, trulie nowe woll I stinte, and on this Margarite I sette me for euer. Now then also. sithen I wisse well it was your will, that I should so soche a seruice me take, and so to desire that thynge, of whiche I neuer haue blisse, there liueth none, but he hath disease: your might then that brought me to soch seruice, that to me is cause of sorow & of ioy, I wõder of your worde that ye sain, to bringen men into ioye, and parde ye wot well that default ne trespace, maie not reasonable been put to me wardes, as ferre as my conscience knoweth: but of my disease me list nowa while to speake, & to enforme you in what maner of blisse ye haue me throng. For truly I wene that all gladnesse all ioye, and all mirthe is beshet vnder lock, and the keie throwe in soche place, that it maie not be found: my brenning who hath altered all my hewe. When I should slepe, I walowe and I thinke, & me disporte. Thus combred, I seme that all folke had me mased. Also ladie mine, desire hath long dured, some speakyng to haue, or els at the leaste haue been enmoised with sight: and for wãtyng of these thynges, my mouthe would and he durste, pleine right sore, sithen euils for my goodnesse, arne manifold to me holden. I wonder Ladie truely, saue euermore your reuerence, howe ye mowe for shame soche thynges suffer on your seruaunte, to be so multiplied: wherefore kneling with a lowe harte, I praie you to rue on this caitife, that of nothyng now maie serue. Good ladie, if you liste now your help to me shew that am of your priuiest seruauntes, at all assaies in this tyme, and vnder your wings of protection. No helpe to me wardes is shapen, how shall then straungers in any wise after succour looke, when I that am so priuie, yet of helpe I doe faile? Further maie I not, but thus in this prisone abide: what bondes and chaines me holden, Ladie ye se wel your self: A reniant forjudged hath not halfe the care. But thus sighyng and sobbyng I waile here alone, and nere it for cõforte of your presence, right here would I sterue. And yet a little am I gladded, that so goodlie soche grace and none happe haue I hente, graciouslie to finde the precious Margarite, that all other leste, men should buie, if thei should therefore sell al her substaunce. Wo is me that so many let games, and purpose breakers been maked waiters, soche prisoners as I am euermore, to ouerlooke and to hinder, and for soche lettours, it is harde any soche iewell to winne. Is this lady an honour to thy deitie? Me thinketh by right, soche people should haue no maistrie, ne been ouerlookers, ouer none of thy seruauntes. Truely were it lefull vnto you, to all the Goddes would I plaine, that ye rule your Diuine purueighaunce emonges your seruauntes, nothing as ye should. Also Ladie my moeble is insufficiaunte, to counteruaile the price of this iewell, or els to make theschaunge: eke no wight is worthie, soche perles to weare, but kynges or Princes, or els their peers: This iewell for bertue, would adorne and make faire all a realme, ỹ nobley of bertue is so moche, that her goodnesse ouer all is commended. Who is it that would not waile, but he might soche riches haue at his wille, the bertue thereof out of this prisone maie me deliuer, and nought els. And if I bee not there thorowe holpen, I see my self withouten recouery: although I mighte hence boide, yet would I not, I would abide the daie, that destenie hath me ordeined, which I suppose is without amendemente, so sore is myne harte bounden, that I maie thinken none other. Thus straite (Ladie) hath sir Daunger laced me in stockes, I leue it be not your will: and for I see you taken so little heede, as me thinketh, & woll not maken by your might, the bertue in mercie of the Margarite on me for to stretch, so as ye mowe wel, in case that you list: my blisse and my mirth arne selde, sickenesse & sorowe been alwaie readie, the cope of tene is wounde about all my bodie, that standyng is me beste, bineth maie I ligge for pure mischaunce sorowe, and yet al this is little inough, to be the earnest siluer, in forward of this bargaine, for treble solde, so mokell muste I suffer, ert tyme come of myne ease. For he is worthie no wealth, that maie no wo suffer. And certes, I am beauie to thinke on these thinges, but who shall yeue me water inough to drinke, lest mine yen drie for rennyng streames of teares? Who shall wailen with me myne owne happie heauinesse? Who shall counsaile me now in my likyng tene, and in my goodlie harse? I not. For euer the more I brenne, the more I coueite: the more that I sorowe, the more thirst I in gladnesse. Who shall then yeue me a contrarious drinke, to staunch the thrust of my blisfull bitternes?

Lo

thus I brenne and I drenche, I shiuer and sweate, to this reuersed ruel was neuer yet ordeined salue, forsoth al liches ben vnconninge, saue the Margarite alone, any soche remedy to puruey.

And wyth these wordes I braste out to wepe, that euery teare of myne eyen for greatnesse semed they borden out the bal of my syght, and that al the water hadde been out ronne. Than thought me, that loue gan a litel to beauy for myscomforte of my chere, and gan soberly and in easy maner speake, wel auising what she said. Comenly the wise speaken easylie & softe for many skilles: One is, their wordes are the better beleued, and also in easy speakynge, auisement men may catche, what to put forthe, and what to holden in. And also the auctoritie of ealye wordes is the more, & ehe they yeuen the more vnderstandyng to other intencion of the mater. Ryght so this ladye easely and in a softe manere, gan say these wordes.

Meruaile (q she) great it is, that by no maner of semblaunt, as ferre as I can espie thou lyste not to haue any recour, but euer thou plainest and sorowest, and wayes of remedie for fooliche wilfulnesse the liste not to seche: but enquire of thy nerte frendes, that is thyne inwitte, and me that haue ben thy maistresse, and the recour and syne of thy disease, for of disease is gladnesse and ioye, with a ful vessel so yelded, that it quēcheth the seling of the first tenes. But thou that were wonte not onely these thynges remembre in thyne herte, but also fooles therof to enfourmen, in adnulling of their errours, and distroiynge of their derke opiniōs, & in comfort of their seare thoughtes: nowe canste thou not ben comforte of thin owne soule: in thinkinge of these thinges. O where haste thou be so long commensal, that haste so mikel eaten of the potages of forgetfulnesse, and dronken so of ignorance that the olde souking, whiche thou haddest of me, arne a maistred and lorne fro all maner of knowinge? O this is a worthy persone to helpe other, that can not counsaile him selfe. And with these wordes for pure and stronge shame I wox al reed.

And she than seinge me so astonied by diuers stoundes, sodainly (whiche thynge kynde hateth) gan delyciously me comforte with sugred wordes, putting me in ful hope that I shulde the Margarite getten, if I folowed her hestes, and gan with a faire clothe to wipen the teares that hyngen on my chekes: and than said I in this wise.

Now welle of wisedome and of all welthe, withouten the may nothynge ben lerned, thou beareste the keies of all priuy thinges. In baine trauaile men to catche anye stedfyyp, but if ye lady firste the locke vnshet, ye lady lerne vs the waies & the bypathes to heauen: ye Lady maken all the heuenly bodies goodly and benignely to done her course, that gouernen vs beestes here on erthe. Ye armen your seruauntes ayenst al debates, with imperciable harneis, ye setten in her hertes insuperable bloode of hardenesse, ye leaden hem to the parfite good. yet al thinge desireth, ye werne no man of helpe that wele done your lore, graunt me nowe a litell of your grace, all my sorowes to cease. Myne owne seruaunt (q she) ire wly thou sittest nie myne herte, and thy badde chere gan sorely me greue: but amonge thy plaining wordes, me thought thou allegest thinges to be letting of thine helping, and thy grace to hinder, wherthrough me thinketh that wanhope is crope through thine hert: god forbid that nise vnthrifti thought shoulde come in thy mynde thy wittes to trouble, sithen euery thynge in commynge is cōtingent, wherefore make no more thy propolytion by an impossible. But nowe I pary the reherse me ayen tho thynges, that thy mystrust causen, and thilke thinges I thinke by reason to distroyen, and put full hope in thine herte. What vnderstandest thou there (q she) by that thou saidest, many let games are thin ouerlokers. And also by that thy moeble is insuffysaunt, I not what thou therof meanest.

Trewly (q I) by the first, I say that ianglers euermore arne speakinge, rather of euyll than of good, for euery age of man rather encline th to wichednesse, thā any goodnesse to auaunce. Also false wordes springen so wyde, by the sterynge of false lipnge tonges, that fame als swyftly flieth to her eares, and saithe manye wicked tales, and as sone shal falsenesse ben leued as trouth, for all his greate sothenesse. Now by that other (q I) me thinketh thilke iewel so precious, ẏ to no soch wretche as I am wolde vertue therof extende, & also I am to feble in worldely ioyes, any soche iewell to contreuaile. For soche people that worldely

loyes han at her will, ben sette at the hyghest degre, and moste in reuerence ben accepted, for false weninge maketh felicite ther in to be supposed: but soche caytiues as I am euermore ben hindred. Certes (q̄ she) take good hede and I shal by reason to thee sheuen, that all these thinges nowe not let thy purpose, by ȳ lest point that any wight coude pricke.

REmēbrest nat (q̄ she) ensample is one of the strongest maner, as for to preue a mannes purpose. Than yf I nowe by ensample enduce thee to any proposicion, is it nat proued by strength: Yes forsothe (q̄ I). Well (q̄ she) raddeste thou neuer howe Paris of Troye and Helaine loued togider, and yet had they not entrecomuned of speche: Also Acrisius shete Dane his doughter in atour, for suertie that no wight shulde of her haue no maistrie in my seruice, & yet Jupiter by sygnes without any spech, had al his purpose ayēst her fathers will. And many soche mo haue ben knitte in trouthe, and yet spake they neuer togider, for that is a thinge enclosed vnder secretenes of priuitie, why twey persons entremellen hertes after a light. The power in knowing of soche thynges so preuen, shal nat al vtterly be yeuen to you beestes, for manye thynges in soche precious matters, ben reserued to iudgement of deuine purueiaunce, for amonge lyuing people, by mannes cōsideracion moun they not be determined. Wherfore I saye, all the enuye, al the ianglinge, that welny people vpon my seruauntes maken ofte, is rather cause of esploite, than of any hyndringe.
Why than (q̄ I) suffre ye soche wronge, and moun whē ye lift, lightly all soche yuels abate, me semeth to you it is a great vnwurship. O (q̄ she) holde nowe thy peace, I haue founden to many that hā ben to me vnkind that trewly I woll suffre euery wyght in that wise to haue disease, and who that continueth to the end wel and trewly, hem wol I helpen, and as for one of mine in to blysse to wende, as marcial doing in Grece. Who was ycrowned, by God nat the strongest, but he that rathest come and lengest abode and continued in the iourney, and spared nat to trauaile as longe as the play lest. But thilke persons that profered him nowe to my seruice theryn is a while, and anon voideth and redy to another, and of nowe one he thinketh, and nowe another, and in to water entreth and anō respireth, soche one like me nat in to perfite blisse of my seruyce bring. A tree oft set in diuers places woll not by kinde endure to bringe forth fruites. Loke nowe I pray the, howe myne olde seruauntes of tyme passed continued in her seruice, and folow thou after their steppes, and thanne might thou not faile, in case thou worche in this wise.
Certes (q̄ I) it is nothinge lich, this world to time passed, ake this coūtre hath one maner, & another countre hath another. And so manie nat a man alwaye put to hys eye, the salue that he healed with his hele. For this is sothe, betwyxe two thynges liche, ofte diuersite is required. Now (q̄ she) that is sothe, diuersite of natyon, dyuersite of lawe, as was maked by many reasons, for that diuersyte cometh in by the contrarious malice of wicked people, that han enuious hertes ayenst other. But trewly my law to my seruauntes euer hath ben ingenerall, whiche maie not faile, for ryght as mannes law, that is ordeined by manie determinacions, may not be knowe for good or badde, tyl assay of the people han proued it, and to what ende it draweth, and than it sheweth the necessite therof, or elles the impossibilite. Right so the law of my seruauntes so wel hath ben proued in general, that hitherto hath it not failed. Wiste thou not well that all the lawe of kinde is my lawe, and by God ordained and stablished to dure by kinde reasoun, wherfore al low by mannes witte purueid, ought to be vnderputte to lawe of kinde, whiche yet hath be commune to euery kindely creature, that my statutes and my lawe that been kyndely, arne generall to all peoples. Olde doinges, and by many turninges of yeres bled, and with the peoples maner proued, mowen not so lightly been defased, but newe doinges contrariauntes soche old, often causen diseases and breaken many purposes.
Yet saie I nat therfore, that ayen new mischiefe, men should not ordained a newe remedye, but alway looke it contrary not the olde, no ferther than the malice stretcheth. Than folowth it, the olde doinges in loue han been vniuersall, as for moste exploite for the bled: Wherfore I wold not yet that of my lawes nothinge be adnulled.
But thanne to thy purpose, soche iangelers

gelers and lookers, and waiters of games; if thei thinke in ought they mowe dere, yet loue wel alway, and sette hem at nought, & lette thy porte been lowe in euery wightes presence, and redie in thine herte to mainteine that thou hast begone, and a litell the saine with meknesse in wordes, and thus with sleight shalte thou surmounte and dequace the yuell in their hertes. And wisedome yet is to seme sye other while there a manne woll sight. Thus with soche thynges, the tonges of yuell shal been stilled: els fully to graunte thy full meaning, forsothe euer was and euer it shall be, that mine enemies ben a ferde to trust to any sighting: and therfore haue thou no cowardes herte in my seruice, no more than sonitime thou haddest in the countrarye, for if thou drede soche ianglers thy viage to make: understand wel, that he that dredeth any rain to sowe his cornes, he shall haue thin bernes, also he that is a ferde of his clothes, let him daunce naked. Who nothinge undertaketh, and namelie in my seruice, nothinge acheueth. After great stormes the wether is often mery and smothe. After moche clatering, there is mobill rowninge: thus after iangling wordes cometh huishte, peace and be still. O good ladye (q I thanke now how seuen yere passed and more, haue I grafted and grouded a vine, and with al the waies that I coude, I sought to a fede me of the grape, but fruit haue I non founde. Also I haue this seuen yere serued Labā to awedded Rachel his doughter, but biere eyed Lia is brought to my bedde, whiche alway engendreth my tene, and is full of childzen in tribulacion and in care: and although the clippinges and kyssynges of Rachell shulde seme to me swete, yet is she so baraine, that gladnesse ne ioye by no way wol springe, so that I may wepe with Rachel, I may not been counsailed with solace, sithen issue of mēn hertely delire is failed. Nowe than I pray that to me sone fredome grace, in this eight yere, this eyghteth mow to me bothe by kynresse and masseday after these seuen werke daies of trauail, to folow the christē lawe: and what euer ye do ells, that thilke Margarite beholden so lady in your pryuy chambre, that she in this case, to none other person be cōmitted. Loke thā (q she) in this cace to none other persone be committed: Looke than (q she) thou persewer in my seruice, in whiche I haue thee grounded, that thilke shame in thy enemies mowe this on thy person be not sothed: lo this man begā to edifie, but for his foundement is bad, to the ende maye he it nat bring. For meknesse in countenaunce, with a manly herte in dedes and in longe continuaunce, is the contsance of my liuery, to al my retinue deliuered. What wenist thou ȳ me lyst auaūce soche persones as louen the firste sittinges at feestes, the highest stoles in churches, & in hal, loutinges of peoples in marketes & faires, vnstedfaste to byde in one place any while togider, wenyng his owne wit more excellent than other, scorning al maner deuise but his owne: Nay nay god wot, these shul nothing partē of my blysse. Truely my maner here to forn hath ben, worship with my blisse, Lions in the felde, and lambes in chambre; Egles at assaute, and maidens in halle, foxes in counsaile, stil in their dedes, and their protection is graunted redy to ben a bridge, and their baner is arered like wolues in the felde. Thus by these wayes shul men ben auaūced: ensample of Dauid that from keping of shepe, was drawen vp in to the order of kingly gouernaunce, and Jupiter from a bole to been Europes fere, & Juliꝰ Cesar frō the lowest degre in Rome, to be maister of al erthly prices, and Eneas from hell, to be kynge of the countre there Rome is now stonding. And so to the I say thy grace by bering therafter, maye set the in soch plight, that no iangling may greue the lest tucke of thy hemmes, that are their ianghes, is nought to counte at a cresse in thy disauauntage.

Euer (q she) hath the people in this worlde desired to haue had great name in worthinesse, and hated foule to here any fame, and that is one of the obiections thou alegest to be ayen thin hertely desire. ye forsothe (q I) and that so comenly the people wol lye & bringe aboute soche enfame. Now (q she) if men with lesinges put on the enfame, we nest thy self thereby ben enpeired: that wening is wrong, se why, for as moch as they lien thy merite encreaseth, and make the ben more worthy to nē that knowē of the the sothe, by what thing thou art apeired, that in so mokil thou arte encreased of thy beloued frendes: and sothely a wounde of thy frend to the lasse harme, ye sir, and better than a false kyssynge in disceiuable glo-

singe of thin enemy, aboue that thou to be wel with thy frende maketh soch enfame. Ergo thou art encreased and nat apeired. Lady (q I) somtyme yet if a man be in disease, the estimacio of the enuious people ne loketh nothing to desertes of men, ne to the merites of theyr doynges, but onely to the auenture of fortune, and thereafter they yeuen their sentence. And some loken the voluntary wil in his herte, and thereafter telleth his iudgemēt, not taking hede to reason ne to the qualyte of the doing, as thus. If a man be riche and fulfilde with worldly welfulnesse, some cōmenden it, and saine it is so lente by iustice cause, & he that hath aduersite, they saine he is weaked, & hath deserued thilke anoye. The contrarye of these thinges some men holden also, and sain that to the rich, prosperite is puruaied in to his confusion, and vpon this matter, many autorites, of many and great witted clerkes they alegen. And some men sayne, though all good estimacion forsaken folke that han aduersite, yet is it merite and encrease of hys blisse, so that these purposes arne so wonderful in vnderstondinge, that trewly for mine aduersite, nowe I not how the sentence of the indifferent people wyll iudgen my fame. Therefore (q she) if anye wight shulde yeue a trew sententе on soche matters, the cause of the disease maist thou se well, vnderstande therupon after what ende it drawethe, that is to sayne good or bade, so ought it to haue his fame, or by goodnesse enfame by baddenesse: for euery reasonable persone, and namelye of a wise man, his witte ought not without reason to forne herde, sodainlyin a matter to iuge. After the sawes of the wise, thou shalt not iuge ne deme toforne thou knowe. Lady (q I) ye remembre wel that in moste laude and prailing of certain saintes in holy church, is to rehearsen their conuersacion frome badde in to good, and that is so rehersed, as by a perpetuall myrour of remembraunce in wurshiping of tho saintes, and good ensample to other misdoers in amendement. How turned the Romaine zedeories fro the Romaines, to be with Hanibal ayenst his owne nacion: And afterwardes him semed the Romains to be at the next degre of confusion, turned to his olde alies, by whose witte after was Hanibal discōfited. Wherfore to enfourme you lady, the maner, why I meane, se now in my youth I was drawe to be assentaut, and in my mghtes helping to certaine coniuracions, and other great matters of rulynge of citezins, and thylke thinges been my drawers in, and eritours to tho matters werne so painted and coloured, that at the prime face, me semed them noble and glorious to al the people: I than wenynge mykell merite, haue deserued in furthering and maintenaunce of tho thinges, besyed and laboured with all my diligence, in werkinge of thilke matters to the ende. And trewly lady to tell you the sothe, me rought lytell of any hate of the mighty senatours in thilke cite, ne of communes malice, for two thilles: One was I had comforte to ben in soche plite, that both profite were to me & to my frendes. Another was, for comunen profite in comunaltie, is not but peace and tranquilite, with iust gouernaunce proceden from thilke profite, sithē by counsaile of mine in witte, me thought the first painted thinges, malice and euyll meaninge, withouten any good auailinge to anye people: and of tyrannye purposed, and so for pure sorowe and of my medlyng, and badde infame that I was in ronne, tho teares lacched out of myne eyen, were thus awaye washe, thanne the vnder hydde malice and the rancoure of purposinge enuie forncaste and ymagined, in distruction of mobil people, shewed so openly, that had I been blinde, with mine handes all the circumstaunce I might wel haue feled.

Nowe than tho persones that soch thinges haue caste to redresse, for wrathe of my firste meddlynge, shopen me to dwel in this pynande prison, tyll Lachases my threde no lenger wolde tweyne. And euer I was sought, if me lyste to haue grace of my lyfe, and freneffe of that prison, I shulde openly confesse howe peace might been endused to enden al the firste rauncours. It was fullie supposed, my knowinge to be ful in tho matters. Than lady I thought that euery man that by any waye of ryght, ryghtfully done, maye helpe anye comune helpe to been saued, whiche thing to kepe aboue all thinges I am holde to mayntaine, and namely in distroiyng of a wrong, al shulde I therthrough enpeche myne owne fere, if he wer gilty, and to do misdede assentaunt. And maister ne frende maye nought auaile, to the soule of hym that in falseneffe deyeth, & also that I nere desired wrathe of the people, ne indignacio of the worthy, for nothing

nothinge that euer I wrought or dyd, in anye doinges my selfe els, but in the maintenaunce of these forsaid errours, and in hydyng of the priuities thereof.

And that al the peoples hertes holding on the errours side, weren blinde and of eide so ferforthe begiled, that debate and strife they maintained, and in distructiō on that other side, by whiche cause the peace, that moste in cōmunaltie should be desired, was in pointe to be broken and annulled. Also the cytye of London, that is to me so dere & swete, in whiche I was forthy growen and more kindely loue haue I to that place, thā to any other in yerth, as euery kindly creature hath full appetite to that place of his kindely engendrure, and to wilne rest and peace in ẏ stede to abyde: thilke peace should thus there haue ben broken, and of al wise it is commended and desired. For nowe thynge it is, all menne that desiren to comen to the parfite peace euerlasting, muste the peace by God commended, both mainteine and kepe. This peace by angels voice was confirmed, our God entryng in this worlde. This as for his testament, he lefte to al his frendes, when he retourned to the place from whence he came: This his Apostell admoneseth to holden, without whiche man parfitly may haue none insight. Also this God by his comynge, made not peace alone betwene heuenly and yerthely bodies, but also among vs on yearth, so he peace confirmed, that in one heed of loue, one body we should perfourme. Also I remembre well howe the name of Athenes was rather after the God of peace, than of batayle, shewyng that peace moste is necessarie to communalties and cytyes. I than so stered by al these wayes to forme nēpned, declared certain pointes in this wise. First that thilke persons that hadden me drawē to their purposes, and me not witting the priuy entent of their meaninge, drawen also the feoble witted people, that haue none insight of gubernatife prudēce, to clamure and to crie on matters that they stired, and vnder pointes for cōmune auauntage, they enbolded the pallife, to take in the actiues doyng, and also stired innocentes of cōning to crie after thinges, whiche (ỹ they) maye not stand but we bē executours of tho matters, and auctorite of execution, by comen election to vs be delyuered, and that muste enter by strength of your maintenaunce, for we out of forthy degree put, oppressiō of these olde hinderers shal againe surmounten and putten you in soche subiection, that in endlesse wo ye shul complaine. The gouernementes (ỹ thei) of your citee left in the handes of forcencious citezins, shal bring in pestilence and distrucion to you goodmenne, and therfore let vs haue the comune administracion to abate soche quelles. Also (ỹ they) it is worthy the good to cōmende, and thy gilty desertes to chastice. There ben citezins many forferde of execuciō that shall be doone, for extorcions by hem committed ben euer more ayenst these purposes, and al other good meninges. Neuer ỹ latter ladie, trewly the meaninge vnder these wordes, was fully to haue apeched the mighty senatours, whiche hadden heauy herte for the misgouernaunce that they seen. And so lady, whan it fel that free eleccion, by great clamour of moche people, for great disease of misgouernaunce so feruently stoden in her election, that they hem submitted to euery maner face, rather than haue suffered the maner and the rule of the hated goueruours, notwithstandyng that in the cōtrary held̄ moch comune meiny, that haue no consideracion, but onelye to voluntary lustes withouten reason. But than thilke gouernour so forsaken, faininge to forne his vndoinge for misrule in his time, hope to haue letted thilke election, & haue made a newe him selfe to haue bene chosen, and vnder that mokyl more haue arered. These thinges lady knowen amonge the princes, and made open to the people, draweth in amendement, that euery degree shal bene ordained to stande there as he shulde, and that of errours coming herafter, mē may lightly to forne hande puruaye remedye, in thys wise, pace and rest to be furthered and hold. Of the which thinges ladie, thilke persons broughten in answer to forne their most soueraine iudge, not coarted by paininge dures openlye knowlegeden, and asked therof grace, so that apertely it preueth my wordes ben soche without forginge of leasinges.

But nowe it greueth me to remēbre these diuers sentences, in iangling of these shrewy people: certes me thinketh they oughten to maken ioy that a sothe maie be knowe. For my trouth and my conscience bene witnesse to me bothe, that this knowing sothe haue I saide for no harme, ne malyce of tho persones, but onely for trouth of my sacremēte

in my leigeaunce, by whiche I was charged on my kinges behalfe. But see ye not nowe lady, how the felonous thoughtes of this people, and couins of wicked men, conspiren ayen my sothfast trouth. Se ye not euery wight that to these erronious opinions, were assentaunts helpes to the noise, and knewen all these thinges better than I my seluen, apparaylen to fynden newe frendes, and cleapen me falle, and studyen howe they mowen in her mouthes werke plyte nempne. O God what maye this be, that thylke folke which that in tyme of my mayntenaunce, and whan my might anailed to streth to the forsaid matters, tho me commended, and yaue me name of trouth, in so manye folde meaneres, that it was nighe in euery wightes eare, there as any of thylke people weren: and on the other syde, thylke companie somtyme passed, yeupnge me name of badde loos. Nowe bothe tho peoples turned the good in to badde, & badde in to good, whiche thing is wonder, that they knowing me saiyng but soth arne nowe tempted to reply her olde prayfinges, and knowen me well in all doinges to ben trewe, and saine openly that I falle haue said many thinges. And they aleged nothinge me to ben falle or vntrewe, saue thilke mater knowleged by the parties hē selfe: and God wot other mater is none. Ye also lady knowe these thinges for trewe, I auaunte not in praising of my selfe, therby shulde I lese the precious secre of my conscience. But ye se well that falle opinion of the people for my trouthe, in tellinge out of falle conspired maters, and after the iudgement of these clerkes I shulde not hide the soth of no maner person, maister ne other, wherefore I wolde not drede, were it put in the consideracion of trewe and of wyse. And for comers hereafter shullen fully out of denwere, all the sothe knowe of these thinges in acte, but as they werne, I haue put it in scripture, in perpetuel remēbraūce of true meanig. For treuly lady me semeth, that I ought to beare the name of trouth, that for the loue of right wisenesse haue thus me submitten: But nowe than the falle fame whiche that clerkes saine flieth as falle as dothe the fame of trouthe, shall so wide spriede, til it be brought to the iewel that I of meane, and so shall I ben hindred withouten any measure of trouthe.

Than gan Loue sadlye me beholde, and saide in a chaunged voyce, lower than she hadde spoken in any tyme. Faine wolde I (q she) that thou were holpen, but hast thou said any thinge, whiche thou might not prouen? Parde (q I) the persons euery thinge as I haue said, han knowleged hem selfe. Yea (q she) but what yf they hadden naied, how woldest thou haue mainteined it. Sothelye (q I) it is well wiste bothe amongest the greatest, and other of the realme, that I profered my body so largely in to prouinge of tho thinges, that Mars shuld haue iudged thende: but for sothnesse of my wordes they durst not to thilke iudge trust. Nowe certes (q she) aboue all fames in this world, the name of marcyal doynges moste pleasen to ladies of my lore, but sythē thou were redy, and thine aduersaires in thy presence refused thilke doynge, thy fame ought to be so borne, as if in ded it had take to the ende. And therfore euery wight that anye droppe of reason hath, and heareth of the infame, for these thinges hath this answere to saye: trewly thou saidest for thyne aduersaries thy wordes affirmed. And yf thou haddest lied, yet are they discōfited, the prise leaned on thy side, so that fame shall holde downe infame, he shall bringe vpon none half. What greueth thee thine enemy to saine their owne shame, as thus: we arn discomfited, and yet oure quarell is trewe. Shall not the loos of thy frendes, ayenward dequace thilke enfame, and say they graunted a sothe without a stroke or fighting. Many men in batail ben discomfited and ouercome in a right full quarell, that is goddes priuy iudgement in heauen: but yet although the partie be poldē, he may w wordes say his quarell is trew, and to yelde him in the contrarie for dread of dethe, he is compelled, and he that graunteth and no stroke hath feled, he may not crepe away in this wise, by none excusacion. Indifferent folke will say, ye who is trew, who is falle him selfe knowlegeth tho thinges. Thus in euery side fame theweth to the good and no badde. But yet (q I) some will saye I ne shuld for no death haue discouered my maistresse, and so by vnkindnes they wol knette infame to pursue me aboute: thus enemies of wil in manifold maner wol seche priuie serpentines queintises, to quenche and di-

stroye

stroye benime of many busines, the light of truthe, to make hartes to murmoure ayest my persone, to haue me in haine, without any cause. Nowe (q she) heare me a fewe wordes, and thou shalt fully been answered, I trowe. Me thinketh (q she) right nowe by thy woordes, that Sacramente of swearyng, that is to saie, charging by othe was one of the causes, to make thee discouer, the malicious ymaginacions tofore nempned, euery othe by knittyng of copulacion, must haue these lawes. That is true iudgemente and rightwisenesse, in whiche thyng, if any of these lache, the othe is iturned into the name of periurie: then to make a true sermente, muste nedes these thynges followe, for ofte tymes a man to saie sothe, but iudgement and iustice folowe, he is forswore: ensample of Herodes for holdyng of his serment, was dampned.

Also to saie truthe rightfulliche, but in iudgement otherwhile is forboden, by that all sothes be not to saine. Therefore in iudgement, in truthe and rightwisenesses, is euery creature bounden vp paine of periurie full knowyng to make, tho it were of his owne persone, for drede of sinne, after that worde better is it to dey, then liue false, and all would peruerted people, false reporte make in vnkindnes, in that entēt thy fame to reise, when light of truthe in these matters is forthe sprōgen, and openly pubished emong commons, then shall not soche darke enfame dare appeare, for pure shame of his falsnes, as some men there been that their owne enfame, can none otherwise voide, or els excuse, but be hinderyng of other mennes fame, whiche that by none other cause, clepen other men fals, but for with their own falsnesse, mowen thei not been auaunsed, or els by false sclanderyng woordes, other men shendin their owne true sclaunder, to make seme the lasse, for if soche men wouldē their yen of their conscience reuoluen, shoulden seen the same sentence, thei legen on other, spring out of their sides, with so many brāches, it wer impossible to nōber. The which therfore maie it be saied in that thing, this man thou demest, therein thy self thou condēpnest. But (q she) vnderstande not by these woordes, that thou wene me saie thee, to bee worthie scolāder, for any matter tofore written, truly I would witnesse the cōtrary, but I saie that the beames of sclanderyng words maie not been dooen awaie, till the daie of dome. For how should it not yet emonges so great plētie of people, been many shrewes, sithen when no mo but eighte persones, in Noes ship wer closed, yet one was a shrewe, and scorned his father. These things (q she) I trowe, shewen that false fame is not to drede, ne of wise persones to accepte, and namely not of thy Margarite, whose wisedome hereafter I think to declare, wherfore I wot well soche thyng shall not her astert, then of vnkindnesse, thine oth hath thee excused at the full. But now if thou wouldest not greue, me liste a fewe thinges to shewe. Saie on (q I) what ye wol, I trow ye mean but trouthe, and my profite in tyme commyng. Truelie (q she) that is sothe, so thou con wel kepe these woordes, and in the inrest secrete chamber of thine harte, so faste hem close, that thei neuer flitte, then shalte thou finde hem auailyng. Looke now what people haste thou serued, whiche of hem all in tyme of thine exile euer thee refreshed, by the value of the lest coigned plate, that walketh in money. Who was sorie, or made any rueth for thy disease? If thei hadden getten their purpose of thy misauenture, sette thei not an haw. Lo whē thou wer enprisoned, howe faste thei hied in helpe of thy deliueraunce. I wene of thy death, thei yeue but lite: Thei looked after no thyng, but after their owne lustes. And if thou liste saie the sothe, all that meinie that in this brigge thee broughten, loheden rather after thyne helpes, then thee to haue releued.

Owen not yet some of hem money for his commons? Paidest not thou for some other dispences, till thei were tourned out of Selande? Who yaue thee euer ought, for any ridyng thou maidest? yet pardie, some of hem tooken money for thy Chamber, and putte tho pens in his pourse, vnwetyng of the renter.

Lo, for which acompanie thou medlest, that neither thee, ne thē self mighten helpe of vnkindenesse, nowe thei beare the name, that thou supposest of hē for to haue. What might thou more haue doen, then thou didest, but if thou wouldest in a false quarell, haue been a stinking martire? I wene thou fleddest as long as thou might, their priuitie to counsaile, whiche thyng thou helest lenger then thou shouldest. And thilke that ought thee money, no pennie would paie, thei wend thy returne had been an impossible. How might thou better haue hē proued

but thus in thy nedie diseases? Now haste thou ensample, for whō thou shalt meddle: truelie this lore is worth many goodes.

Ofte gā loue to sterne me these wordes, thinke on my spech, for truelie here after, it woll dooe thee likyng, and how so euer thou see Fortune shape her whele to tourne, this meditacion by no waie reuolue. For certes fortune sheweth her fairest, when she thinketh to begile. And as me thought here toforne, thou saidest thy loos in loue, for thy rightwisenesse ought to be raised, should bee alowed in tyme comyng. Thou might in loue so thee haue, that loos & fame shull so been raised, that to thy frendes comforte, and sorowe to thin enemies, endlesse shul endure.

But if thou were that one Shepe emonges the hundred, were luste in deserte, and out of the waie had erred, and nowe to the flocke art restored, the Shepherde hath in thee no ioye, and thou ayen to the Forreste tourne. But that right as the sorowe and anguishe was greate, in tyme of thyne out waie goyng, right so ioye and gladnes shall bee doubled, to seen thee conuerted, and not as Lothes wife ayen lookyng, but hoole counsaile with the Shepe folowyng, and with them grasse and herbes gader. Neuer the later (q̄ she) I saie not these thynges for no wantruste that I haue, in supposyng of thee otherwise then I should. For truelie I wote wel, that now thou art sette in soche a purpose, out of whiche thee liste not to part. But I saie it, for many men ther been that to knowyng of other mennes doyngs, setten all their cure, and lightly desiren the badde to clatter, rather then the good, and haue no will their owne maner to amende. Thei also hate of old rancour lightly hauē, and there that soche thing abideth, sodainly in their mouthes procedeth, the habundaunce of the harte, and wordes as stones, stones out throwe. Wherfore my counsaile is euermore, openlie and apertlie, in what place thou sit, counterplete therrours and meaninges, in as ferre as thou hem wistest false, and leaue for no wight, to make hem be knowe in euery bodies eare, & be alwaie pacient, and vse Jacobes woordes, what so euer menne of thee clappen, I shall sustain my ladies wrathe, whiche I haue deserued, so long as my Margarite hath rightwised my cause. And certes (q̄ she) I witnesse my self, if thou thus cōuerted, sorowest in good meanyng in thyne harte, wolt from all vanitie parfitely departe, in consolacion of al good pleasaunce of that Margarite, which that thou desirest after wil of thine hart, in a maner of a mothers pitie, shull fullie accept thee into grace. For right as thou rentest clothes in open sight, so openlie to sowe hem at his worshippe, withouten reproofe commended. Also, right as thou were ensample of moche folde errour, right so thou muste bee ensample of manyfolde correccion, so good fauour to forgoyng all erroure destoiyng, causeth diligente loue, with many plaited praisynges to followe; and then shall all the firste errours, make the followyng worshippes, to seme hugelie encreased, blacke and white sette togider, euery for other more semeth, and so doth euery things contrarie in kinde. But infame that goeth alwaie tofore, and praising worship by any cause folowyng after, maketh to rise thilke honour, in double of wealth, and that quēcheth the spotte of the firste enfame. Why weneste I saie these thynges, in hinderyng of thy name? Naie naie God wotte, but for pure encreasyng worshippe, thy rightwisenesse to commende, and thy trouthe to seme the more. Woste not well thy self, that thou in forme of makyng, passeth not Adame, that eate of the apple. Thou passeth not the stedfastnes of Noe, that eatyng of the grape become dronke. Thou passest not the chastitie of Lothe, that laie by his doughter. Eke the nobley of Abraham, whom God reproued by his pride. Also Dauides mekenesse, whiche for a woman made Urie bee slawe. What also Hector of Troie, in whom no defaute might bee founde, yet is he reproued that he ne had with māhod, not suffred the warre begon: ne Paris to haue went into Grece, by whom ganne all the sorowe: for truelie hym lacketh no venime of priuie cōsentyng, whiche ẏ openly leaueth a wrong to withsaie. Lo eke an olde prouerbe, emōg many other. He that is stille, semeth as he graunted.

Now by these ensamples, thou might fully vnderstand, that these thinges been writ to your learning, and in rightwisnes of tho persones, as thus: To euery wight his defaut committed, made goodnesse afterwardes doen, be the more in reuerence, and in open shewyng, for ensample is it not song in

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holy churche. Lo how necessarie was Adãs sinne, Dauid the kyng gatte Salomon the King, of her that was Uries wife. Truelie for reproke, is none of these thynges writte: Right so tho I rehearse thy before deede, I repreue thee neuer the more, ne for no villany of thee, ar thei rehearsed, but for worship so thou cõtinue well hereafter, and for profite of thy self, I rede thou on hem thinke.

Then saied I right thus. Ladie of vnitie and accorde, enuie and wrathe lurken, there thou comeste in place, ye weten well your selue, and so dooen many other, that while I administred the office of common dooyng, as in rulyng of the stablishementes emonges the people, I defouled neuer my conscience for no maner deede, but euer by wit & by counsail of the wisest, the matters weren drawẽ, to their right endes. And thus truly for you ladie, I haue desired soche cure, and certes in your seruice was I not idle, as far as soch dooing of my cure stretcheth. That is a thing (q she) that may drawe many harts of noble, and voyce of common into glorie, and fame is not but wretched and fickle.

Alas, that mankinde couiteth in so leud a wise, to bee rewarded of any good deede, sithe glorie of fame in this worlde, is not but hinderyng of glorie in tyme commyng. And certes (q she) yet at the hardeste soche fame into heauen, is not the yearthe but a centre, to the cercle of heauen. A pricke is wonder little, in respecte of all the cercle, and yet in all this pricke, maie no name be borne, in maner of persyng, for many obstacles, as waters and wildernesse, & straunge languages, and not onelie names of menne been stilled, and holden out of knowleging, by these obstacles, but also cities and realmes of prosperitie, been letted to be knowe, and their reason hindred, so that thei mow not been perfitely in mennes proper vnderstandyng. Howe should then the name of a singuler lõdenoys, passe the glorious name of London, whiche by many it is commended, and by many it is lacked, and in many mo places in yearth not knowen, then knowen: for in many countrees, little is Londõ in knowyng, or in speache, and yet emong one maner of people, maie not soche fame in goodnesse come, for as many as praisen, cõmonly as many lacken. Fie then on soche maner fame, slepe and suffre him that knoweth priuitie of hartes, to deale soche fame in thilke place, there nothing ayenst a sothe shal neither speake, ne dare apere, by attorney, ne by other maner. How many greate named, and many greate in worthinesse loued, han bee tofore this tyme, that now out of memorie are slidden, and cleanly forgetten, for defaute of writynges, and yet scriptures for great elde, so been defaced, that no perpetualtie maie in hem been iudged. But if thou wolt make cõparison to euer, what ioye maiest thou haue in yearthly name, it is a faire likenesse, a pees or one graine of Wheat, to a thousande shippes full of corne charged. What nomber is betwene the one and the other, and yet mowe bothe thei bee nombred, and ende in rechenyng haue. But truely al that maie be nombred, is nothing to rechen, as to thilke that maie not bee nõbred, for ofte thinges ended is made comparison, as one little, an other greate, but in thynges to haue an ende, and an other no ende, soche comparison maie not bee founden. Wherfore in heauen to beeu loued, with God hath none ende, but endlesse endureth, and thou canste nothyng doen arighte, but thou desire the rumour thereof bee healed, and in euery wightes eare, and that dureth but a pricke, in respecte of the other. And if thou seekest reward of folkes, smale woordes, and of vain praisynges. Truelie therein thou lesest the guerdone of vertue, and lesest the greatest valour of conscience, and byhap thy renome euerlastyng. Therefore boldly renome of fame, of the yearth should be hated, and fame after death should be desired, of werkes of vertue alketh guerdoning, and the soule causeth all vertue. Thã the soule deliuered out of prison of yearthe, is moste worthie soche guerdone emong, to haue in the euerlastyng fame, and not the bodie, that causeth all mannes euils.

Of twey thynges art thou answered, as me thinketh (q Loue) and if any thyng be in doubte in thy soule, shewe it forthe, thyne ignorannce to cleare, and leaue it for no shame. Certes (q I) there ne is no bodie in this worlde, that aught could saie by reasõ, ayenst any of your skilles, as I leue, and by my wit now fele I well, that euill speakers, or bearers of enfame, may little greue or let my purpose, but rather by soche thing my quarell to bee forthered. Yea (q she) and it is proued also, that the ilke iewell in my

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keping, shall not there through bee stered, of the lest moment that might be imagined. That is sothe (q I). Well (q she) then leneth there, to declare that thy insufficiaunce, is no maner letting, as thus, for that she is so worthie, thou shouldest not climbe so high, for thy moebles and thine estate arn voided thou thinkeste fallen in soche miserie, that gladnes of thy pursute, woll not on thee discende. Certes (q I) that is sothe: right soche thought is in mine harte, for commonlie it is spoken, and for an olde prouerbe it is ledged: he that heweth to hie, with chippes he maie lese his sight. Wherefore I haue been about in al that euer I might, to studie wayes of remedie, by one side or by an other. Now (q she) God forbede, ere thou seke any other doynges, but soche as I haue learned thee in our restyng whiles, and soche herbes as been planted in our Gardins. Thou shalte well understande, that aboue man is but one God alone. How (q I) han men to forne this tyme, trusted in writtes & chauntementes, and in helpes of Spirites, that dwellen in the aire, and thereby thei han getten their desires, where as firste for all his manlie power he daunced behinde.

O (q she) fie on soche matters, for truelie that is sacrilege, and that shal haue no sort with any of my seruauntes, in myne iyen shal soche thing not be loked after. How often is it commanded by these passed wise, that to one God shall men serue, and not to Goddes. And who that liste to haue mine helpes, shall aske non help of foule spirites. Alas, is not man maked semblable to God? Woste thou not well, that all vertue of liueliche werkyng by Goddes purueighaunce, is vnderput to reasonable creature in yerth is not euery thyng a thilchalke God? Made burome to mannes contemplacion, vnderstandyng in heauen, and in yearthe, and in helle. Hath not manne beyng with stones, soule of weryng with trees and herbes.

Hath he not soule of feling, with beastes fisshes, and foules, and he hath soule of reason, and vnderstãding with Angels, so that in him is knitte all maner of liuinges, by a reasonable proporcion. Also man is made of all the fower Elementes. All vniuersitie is rehened in him alone: he hath vnder God principalitie aboue al thinges. Now is his soule here, now a thoulande mile hẽce, now farre, now nigh, now highe, now lowe, as farre in a moment, as in mountenaunce of ten winter, and all this is in mannes gouernaunce and disposicion. Then she weth it, that menne been liche vnto Goddes, and childzen of moste height. But nowe sithen all thynges vnderput, to the wille of reasonble creatures, God forbede any man to win that Lordship, and alhe helpe of any thyng, lower then hym selfe, and then namelie of foule thynges innominable.

Nowe then, why shouldest thou wene to loue to high. sithen nothyng is thee aboue, but God alone. Truelie I wote well, that the ilke iewell is in a maner, euen in line of degree, there thou art thy selue, and nought aboue, saue thus. Angell vpon Angell, man vpon man, and Deuill vpon Deuill, han a maner of Souerantie, and that shall cease at the daie of Dome: and so I saie, though thou bee put to serue thilke iewell, duryng thy life, yet is that no seruage of vnderputtyng, but a maner of trauailing pleasance, to conquere and get that thou haste not.

I set nowe the hardest in my seruice, now thou deidest for sorowe, of wantyng in thy desires: Trulie all heauenlie bodies, with one voyce shull come, and make melodie in thy coming, and saie welcome our fere, and worthie to enter into Jupitersioy, for thou with mighte haste ouercome deathe, thou wouldest neuer fitte out of thy seruice, & we all shull now praie to the Goddes, rowe by rowe, to make the ilke Margarite, that no routhe had in this persone, but vnkindely without comforte lette thee deie, shall beset her self in soch wise, that in yearth for part of vengeaunce, shall she no ioye haue in loues seruice: and when she is dedde, then shal her soule been brought vp into thy presence, and whider thou wilte chese, the ilke soule shal been committed. Or els after thy death, anone all the forsaid heauenlie bodies by one accorde, shall bee nommen from thilke perle, all the vertues that firste her were taken, for she hath hem forfeited, by that on thee my seruaunte, in thy liue she would not suffer to worche all vertues, wdrawen by might of the high bodies: Why then shouldest thou wene so any more. And if thee liste to looke vpon the lawe of kinde, and with order, whiche to me was ordained, sothlie none age, none ouertournyng tyme, but hitherto had no tyme ne power, to chaunge the weddyng, ne that knotte to vnbinde of two hartes, through one assente in my presence, togither accorden to endurẽ

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till death hem departe. What trowest thou euery ideot, wot the meanyng and the priuie entente of these thinges? Thei wene for soth, that soche accorde maie not be, but the Rose of maidenhede bee pluched, dooe waie dooe waie, thei knowe nothyng of this: for consente of twoo hartes a lone, maketh the fastenyng of the knot, neither lawe of kinde ne mannes Lawe, determineth neither the age, ne the qualitie of persones, but onelie accorde betwene thilke twaie. And truelie, after tyme that soche accorde, by their consent in harte, is ensealed and put in my tresorie, emonges my priuie thinges: then ginneth the name of spousaile, and although thei breaken forward bothe, yet soche matter ensealed, is kepte in remembraunce for euer. And se now that spouses haue ȳ name anon after accorde, though the Rose be not take. The Aungell bade Joseph, take Mari his spouse, and to Egipt wende: Lo she was cleped spouse, and yet tofore ne after, neither of hem bothe meante, no fleshely luste knowe, wherefore the wordes of trouth acorden, that my seruantes shoulden forsake bothe father and mother, and be adherand to his spouse, and thei twoo in vnitie of one flesh, shoulden accorde. And this wise twoo that werne firste, in a little maner disacordaunte, higher that one, and lower that other, been made euenliche in gree to stonde.

But nowe to enforme thee, that ye been liche Goddes, these clerkes saine, and in determinacion shewen, that thre thinges hauen the names of Goddes been cleped, that is to saine: Man, Deuill, and Images, but yet is there but one God, of whom all goodnesse, all grace, and all vertue cometh, and he is louyng and true, and euerlasting, and prime cause of all beyng thynges: but men been goddes, louing and true, but not euerlasting, and that is by adopcion, of the euerlastyng God. Deuils been Goddes, stirring by a maner of liuyng, but neither been thei true, ne euerlasting, and their name of godlihede, thei han by vsurpacion, as the Prophete saieth: All Goddes of Gentiles, that is to saie, Painims, are Deuils. But Images been Goddes by nuncupacion, and thei been neither liuing ne true, ne euerlasting: After these wordes, thei clepen Goddes Images, wrought with mennes handes.

But nowe reasonable creature, that by adoption alone, art to the greate God euerlastyng, and thereby thou art God cleaped: let thy fathers maners so entre thy wittes, that thou might folowe, in as moche as lōgeth to thee thy fathers worship, so that in nothing, thy hinde from his will decline, ne from his nobley pouertie. In this wise if thou werche, thou art aboue al other thinges, saue GOD alone, and so saie no more thine harte, to serue in to hie a place.

Tullie haue I nowe declared, thin estate to be good, so thou followe thereafter, and that the abiection first be thee aleged, ī worthines of thy Margarite, shall not thee let, as it shall forther thee, & encrease thee, it is now to declare, the last obiecciō in nothing maie greue. Yes certes (q I) bothe greue, and let muste it nedes, the contrary maie not been proued, and see now why. While I was glorious in worldlie welfulnesse, and had soch goodes in wealth, as maken men riche, tho was I drawe into compaignies that loos, prise, and name yeuen: Tho louteden blasours, tho curretden glosours, tho welcomedē flatterers, tho worshipped thilk, that now deinen not to looke. Euery wight in soche yearthlie weale habundaunt, is hold noble, precious, benigne, and wise, to dooe what he shall, in any degree that men hym set, all be it that the sothe be in the contrary of all tho thinges: but he that can, ne neuer so wel him behaue, and hath vertue haboundaunte, in manyfolde maners, and be not wealthed with soche yearthlie goodes, is holde for a foole, and saied his wit is but sotted. Lo how false for auer is holde true. Lo howe true is cleaped falle, for wantyng of goodes. Also Ladie, dignitees of office, maken menne mikell comended, as thus: he is so good, wer he out, his pere should mē not find. Truelie I trowe of some soch that are so praised, were thei out ones, an other should make him so bee knowe, he should of no wise no more been loked after: but onely fooles well I wot, desiren soche newe thinges. Wherfore I wonder that thilke gouernour, out of whom alone the causes proceden, that gouernen all thinges, which that hath ordeined this worlde, in werkes of the kindly bodies so be governed, not with vnstedfast or happious thinge, but with rules of reason, whiche shewen the course of certain thinges: why suffreth he soche sliding chaunges, ȳ misturnen soche noble thinges

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as been we men, that arne a faire perfell of the yearth, and holden the vpperest degree vnder God of benigne thinges, as ye saiden right now your self, should neuer man haue been set in so worthie a place, but if his degree were ordained noble. Alas, thou that knittest the purueighaunce of all thynges, why lookest thou not to amenden these defautes: I see shrewes that han wicked maners, sitten in chaires of domes, Lambes to punishen, there Wolues should been punished. Lo, vertue shined naturelly, for pouertie lurketh, and is hid vnder cloude: but the Mone false forsworne, as I knowe my self, for auer and yeftes hath vsurped, to shine by daie light, with peinture of other mennes praisynges: & truely thilke forged light fouly should fade, were the trouth awaie of colours feined. Thus is night tourned into daie, and daie into night, Winter into Sommer, and Sommer into Winter, not in dede but in misleapyng of foolishe people.

Nowe (q she) what weneste thou of these thynges? How felest thou in thyne hart, by what gouernance that this cometh about?

Certes (q I) that wotte I neuer, but if it be, that Fortune hath graunt from aboue, to lede the ende of menne as her liketh. Ah now I se (q she) the entent of thy meanyng: Lo, bicause thy worldly goodes, been fullische dispente, thou berafte out of dignitie of office, in which thou madest thy gathering, of thilke goodes, and yet diddest in that office, by counsaile of wise, any thynge were ended: and true were vnto hem, whose profite thou shouldest looke, and seest now many, that in the ilke heruest made of thee mokell, and now for glosyng of other, deineth thee nought to forther, but enhaunsen fals shrewes, by witnessyng of trouthe. These thinges greueth thine harte, to seen thy self thus abated, and then frailtie of manhinde ne setteth but litle, by the lesers of soche richesse, haue he neuer so mocke vertue, and so thou weneste of thy self, to renne in dispite, and not been accepted into grace: All this shall thee nothyng hinder. Now (q she) first thou woste well, thou losest nothyng, that euer mightest thou chalenge for thine own: whē nature brought thee forth, come thou not naked, out of thy mothers wombe? Thou hadest no richesse, and when thou shalt enter, into the ende of euery fleshly bodie, what shalte thou haue with thee then? So euery richesse thou hafte, in tyme of thy liuing, nis but lent, thou might therin chalēge no propertie. And se now, euery thing that is a mannes owne, he maie dooe therewith what hym liketh, to yeue or to keepe: but richesse thou plainest from thee loste, if thy might had stretched so ferforthe, faine thou wouldes haue kepte, multiplied with mo other: and so ayenste thy will, been thei departed from thee, wherefore thei wer neuer thine. And if thou laudest and ioyest any wight, for he is stuffed with soche maner richesse, thou art in that beleue begiled, for thou weneste thilke ioye to be selinesse, or els ease, & he that hath loste soche haps, to been vnselie. Ye forsothe (q I). Well (q she) then woll I proue that vnsely, in that wise is to praise, and so the tother is the contrary to be lacked. Howe so (q I)? For vnselie (q she) begileth not, but sheweth the entent of her worhyng. Et ecōtra. Selinesse begileth, for in prosperitie, she maketh a iape in blindenesse, that is she windeth hym to make sorowe, when she withdraweth. Woltе thou not (q she) praise hym better, that sheweth to thee his harte, tho it be with bitāde wordes, and dispitous, then hym that glosеth, and thinketh in their absence, to dooe thee many harmes. Certes (q I) the one is to cōmende, and the other to lacke and dispise. A ha (q she) right so ease while he lasteth, glosеth and flattereth, & lightly voideth, when she moste pleasauntly sheweth, and euer in her absence, she is aboute to dooe thee tene and sorowe in harte: But vnselie all bee it with bitande chere, sheweth what she is, & so dooeth not that other, wherefore vnselie doeth not begile. Selinesse disceiueth: vnselie put awaie doubt. That one maketh men blind, that other openeth their yen, in shewyng of wretchednesse. The one is full of drede, to lese that is not his owne: That other is sober, and maketh men discharged of mokell heauinesse in burthen: The one draweth a man from very good, the other haleth him to vertue, by ỹ hokes of thoughtes. And weneste thou not, that thy disease hath doen thee mokell more to winne, then euer yet thou lostest? And more thā euer the contrary made thee winne. Is not a greate good to thy thinking, for to knowe the hartes of thy sothfast frendes. Parde thei been proued to the full, and the true haue discreuered from the false. Truely at the goyng of thilke brotell ioye, there yede no more awaie, then the ilke that was not thyne proper:

per: He was neuer from that lightly departed, thine own good therfore leaueth it stil with the. Nowe good (q̄ she) for how moche woldest thou sometyme haue bought, this very knowynge of thy frendes, frome the flaterynge fyes that they glosed, whan thou thought thy selfe sely. But thou that plainest of losse in richelle, hast founden the most dere worthy thinge that thou cleapest vnsely, hath made the moche thing to winnen. And also for conclusioun of all, he is frend that nowe leaueth not his hert from thin helpes. And if that Margarit denieth now not to suffre her vertues shine to the wardes, wyth spreadinge beames, as farre or farther than if thou were sely in worldely ioye: Trewly I saye not elles but she is some dele to blame.

Ah, peace (q̄ I) and speake no more of thys mine herte braketh, nowe thou touchest any soche wordes. I well (q̄ she) thanne lette vs syngen, thou herest no more of these thinges at this thime

☞Thus endeth the first booke of the Testament of Loue, and here after foloweth the seconde.

VEry welth maye not be foundē in al this world, and that is wel sene: Lo howe in my moste comfort, as I wende & most supposed to haue had full answer of my contrary thoughtes, sodainly it was banished. And all the workes of man faren in the same wise whan folke wenen beste her entente for to haue, and willes to perfourme, anon chaunging of the lift side to the right halue, tourneth it so clene in to another kind, that neuer shal it come to the firste plite in doinge.

O this wrongful steering so soone, otherwised out of knowing, but for my purpose was at my beginninge, and so dureth yet, yf God of his grace tyme woll me graunt, I thinke to performe this worke, as I haue begonne in loue, after as my thinne witte, wyth inspyracyon of him that hildeth all grace woll suffre. Greuously God wotte haue I suffred a great throwe that the Romayn Emperour, whiche in vnyte of loue shuld accorde and euery wity other, in cause of other to auaunce, and namely sithe this Empire to be corrected of so many sectes in herely, of faith, of seruice, of rule in loues religion. Trewly all were it but to shende erronious opinions, I maye it no lenger suffre: For many menne ther ben that sain loue to ben in grauell and sande, that with sea ebbing and flowing woweth, as riches that sodainly wanisheth. And some saine that loue shulde be in windy blasles, that stoundemele tourneth as a phane, and glorie of renome, whiche after lustes of the variaunt people is areysed or stilled. Manie also wenen that in the sunne & the moone, and other sterres, loue shulde ben founden, for amonge all other planettes moste souerainlie they shinen, as dignitees in reuerēce of estates rather than good han, and occupien. Full many also there ben that in ohes and in huge postes suppolen loue to ben groūded, as in strēgth and in might, wyich mowen not helpen their owne wretchednesse, whan they ginne to fal. But soche diuersite of sectes ayenst the rightfull byleue of loue, these errours been forth spredde, that loues seruaūtes in the treue rule and stedfast faith, in no place darne apere: Thus irrecuparable ioy is went, & anoy endelesse is entred. For no mā aright reproueth soche errours, but comfirmen their wordes, and sain that badde is noble good, and goodnes is badde, to whiche folke the prophet biddeth, wo without ende.

Also many tongues of great false techinges in gilinge maner, principallye in my times, not onely with wordes, but also with armes, loues seruaunts and profesle in his religion of trew rule, purlewen to confounden and to distroyen. And for as moche as holy fathers, that our christen faithe aproued and strengthed to the Jewes, as to men reasonable, and of diuinite lerned, proued thilke faithe with reasones, and with auctorites of the olde testamēt, and of the newe, her pertinacie to distroy: But to painyms, that for beestes & houndes wer holde to putte hem out of their errour, was myracles of god shewed. These thinges were figured by coming of thangell to the shepeherdes, & by the sterre to painims hinges as who saith: Angel resonable, to reasonable creature & sterre of miracle to people bestial Inotlearned, werne sent to enforme. But I ouersclerke in al my conning & with al my mightes, trewly I haue no soche grace in

vertue of miracles, ne for no disconfite falshedes, suffiseth not auctorites alone, sithē that suche heretikes and mayntaynours of falsites. Wherfore I wot well sithen that they been men, and reason is approued in hem, the clowde of errour hath her reason bewond probable reasons, whiche that catchēde wit rightfully may not with sitte. But my trauaillynge studie I haue ordeined hem, with that auctorite mysglosed by mannes reason, to graunt shall bee enduced.

Now ginneth my pēne to quake, to thinken on the sentences of the enuious people, whiche alwaye been redy, both ryder and goer to shorne and to iape this leude booke and me for rancoure and hate in their hertes they shullen so dispyse, that although my booke be leude, yet shal it ben more leude holden, and by wicked wordes in manye maner apaired. Certes me thinketh the sowne of their badde speche, right nowe is full bothe mine eares. O good precious Margarite, mine herte shulde wepe, yf I wist ye token hede of soche manere speche, but trewly I wotte wel in that your wysedome shall not asterte. For of God maker of kind witnesse I take, that for none enuy ne yuel haue I drawe this matter togider, but only for goodnesse to maintain, & errours in falsetes to distroy. Wherfore (as I said) with reasō I thinke, thilke for said errours to distroye and dequace. These resons and soch other, yf they enduce men in loues seruice, trewe to beleue of parfite blisse, yet to full faithe in credence of desert, fully mowe they not suffise, sithen faith hath no merite of mede, whan mannes reason shewether-perience in doing. For vtterly no reason the parfite blisse of loue by no way maye make to be comprehended. Lo what is a perfell of louers ioye, parfite science in good seruice, of their desire to comprehende in bodely doinge, the lisning of the soule, nat as by a glasse to haue contemplacion of tyme cominge, but thilke firste imagined and thought, after face to face in beholdynge: what hert, what reason, what vnderstandinge can make his heuen to be feled and know without assay of doing: certes none. Sithen than of loue cometh soche fruite in blisse, and loue in him selfe is the moste amonge other vertues, as clerkes sain: The sede of soche springinge in all places, in all countreis, in all worldes shulde been sowe.

But o well awaye thilke sede is forsake, and nowen not been suffred the londe tilers to set a werke, without meddlynge of cockle, badde wedes which somtime slonhē hath caught the name of loue amonge ydiotes and badde meaning people. Neuer the latter, yet howe so it be that menne cleape thilke hinge preciousest in kinde, with many eke names, that other thinges, that the soule yeuen the ilke noble name, it sheweth well that in a maner men haue a great lyking in wurshipping of thilke name, wherfore this worke haue I writte, and to the tytled of loues name, I haue it auowed in a maner of sacrifice, that where euer it be radde, it mow in merite be the excellence of thilke name the more wer in authorite and wurshippe of takinge in hede, and to what entente it was ordained, the in feeres mowen been moued: Euery thinge to whome is owande occasion done as for his ende, Aristotle supposeth that the actes of euery thinge been in a maner his finall cause. A final cause is noblerer, or els euen as noble as thilke thinge that is finally to thilke ende, wherfore accion of thinge euerlasting is demed to be eternall, and not temporall, sithen it is his finall cause: Right so the actes of my booke loue, and loue is noble, wherfore though my booke be leude, the cause with whiche I am stered, and for whō I ought it doin, noble forsothe been bothe. But bycause that in conninge I am yonge, and canne yet but crepe, thys leude A, b, c, haue I set in to lerning, for I can not passen the tellinge of thre as yet: and yf God will in shorte time, I shall amend this leudnesse in ioyninge of silables, whiche thing for dulnesse of witte I maye not in thre letters declare. For trewly I say the goodnesse of my Wagarite perle wolde yeue matter enditinge to many clerkes: certes her mercy is more to me swetter than anye lyuynges, wherfore my lyppes mowen not suffice in speaking of her ful laude and worshippe as they shuld. But who is that in knowing of the orders of heuē, and putteth his resones in the erthe: I forsothe may not with blere eyen, the shininge sonne of vertue in bright whele of this Wargarite beholde, therfore as yet I maye her not discriue in vertue as I wolde. In time comming in another tretise thorow goddes grace, this sonne clerenesse of vertue to be knowe, and howe she enluminneth al this day, I thinke to declare.

In

In this meane while this cõfortable lady gã sing, a wõder mater of enditing in Latin, but trewly the noble colours in Rhetorike, wise knit were so craftely, that my cõning woll not stretche to remembre, but the sentence I trowe somedele haue I in minde. Certes they were wonder swete of sowne, and they were touched al in lamentacion wise, and by no werbelles of mirthe Lo thus ganne she sing in Latin, as I may construe it in our Englische tonge.

Alas that these heuenlye bodies their lyght and course shewen, as nature yaue hem in commaundement at the ginning of the firste age, but these thinges in fre choise of reason han none vnderstandinge: but manne that ought to passe all thynge of doinge, of right course in kinde, ouer whelmed sothenesse by wrongful tytle, and hath drawen the sterre of enuy to gon by his side that the clipes of me that shoulde be his shinande sonne, so ofte is sey, that it wened thilke errour thorowe hem come in, shulde been myne owne defaute. Trewly therfor I haue me withdrawe, and made my dwellynge out of lande in an yle by my selfe, in the occian closed, and yet saine there many they haue me harberowed, but God wot they saylen. These thinges me greuen to thinke, & namely on passed gladnesse, that in this worlde was wonte me disporte of highe and lowe, and nowe it is failed: they that wolden maistries me haue in thilke stoundes. I heauen on high aboue Saturnes sphere, in seasonable tyme wer they loged, but nowe come queinte counsaillours that in no house woll suffre me seiourne, wherof is pite: And yet sain some that they me haue in celler with wine shed, in garnere ther corne is laide, couered with whet, in sacke sowed with wol, in purse with money faste knitte, among pannes mouled in a wiche, in presse among clothes laid with riche pelure araied, in stable amonge horse and other beestes as hogges, shepe, & nete, and in other maner wise. But thou maker of light (in winkinge of thin ye the sonne is queint) wost right well that I in trewe name was neuer thus herberowed. Somtyme to forne the sonne in the seuenth partie was smitē, I bare both crosse and mitre, to yeue it were I wolde, with me the pope went a fote, and I tho was wurshiped of al holy churche, kinges baden me their crownes holden. The lawe was set as it shuld: to fore the iudge as wel that pore durst shewe his grete as the riche, for all his money. I defended tho tailages, and was redy for the poore to pay. I made great feestes in my time, and noble songes, and maried damoselles of gentill keture, withouten golde or other rychesse. Poore clerkes for witte of schole, I sette in churches, and made soche persones to preach: and tho was seruice in holy churches honest and deuoute, in plesaunce bothe of God and of the people. But nowe the leude for simonie is auanced, and shendeth al holye churche. Now is steward for his achates, nowe is courtiour for his debates, now is eschetoure for his wrōges, nowe is losell for his sonnges, persōner and prouendre alone, with whiche many thrifty shulde encrease. And yet is this shrewe behinde, fre herte is forsake, & losengeour is take. Lo it accordeth, for soche there ben that voluntarie lustes haunten in courte with ribaudrie, that till midnight and more wol playe and wake, but in the churche at matins he is behinde, for euil disposicion of his stomake: therfore he shuld eate beane breade, and so dyd his sire, his estate there with to strengthen. His aulter is broke, and lowe lithe in pointe to gone to the yerthe, but his horse must ben esely and hie to beare him ouer greate waters. His chalice poore, but he hath riche cuppes, so to waile but a shete there God shall been handeled. And on his meate borde there shall been borde clothes and towelles many paire. At masse serueth but a clergion: fiue squiers in hall. Poore chauncell, open holes in euery side: beddes of silke with tapites going al about his chambre. Poore masse booke and leude chapelaine, and broken surplice with manye an hole: good houndes and manye, to hunte after harte and hare, to lede in their feestes. Of poore men haue they great care, for they euer craue, & nothinge offren, they wolden haue hem doluen. But amonge legystres there dare I not come, my doinge they saine maken hem nede, they ne wolde for nothing haue me in towil, for than wer tort & forth nought worthe an haw about, and plesen no mē, but thilke greuous and torcious been in might and in doinge: these thinges toforne laid mowe wel if men lille ryme, trewly they acorde nothinge. And for as moch as al thinges by me shulden of right

ben gouerned, I am sorye to se that gouernaunce faileth, as thus: To sene smale and low gouerne the hie, and bodies aboue. Certes that policye is nought, it is forbode by them that of gouernaunce treaten and enformen. And right as beestly witte shulde ben subiecte to reason, so erthely power in it self, the lower shuld ben subiect to ỹ hier.

What is worth thy body but it be gouerned with thy soule: right so litel or nought is worthe erthely power, but if regnatife prudence in heedes gouerne the smale, to whiche heedes the smal owen to obey, and suffise in their gouernaunce. But souerainnesse ayen warde shulde thinke in this wise I am seruaunt of these creatures to me deliuered, not lord but defendour: not maister but enfourmer, not possessour but in possession, and to hemlyche a tree in whiche sparowes shullen stelen, here bydes to norishe and forth bringe vnder suertie ayenst al reueinous foules and beestes, and not to be tiraunt them self. And than the smale in reste and quiete, by the heedes wel disposed, owen for their soueraines helth and prospe rite to pray, and in other doinges, in maintenaunce thereof performe, wythouten other administracion in rule of anye maner gouernaunce. And they wit haue in hem, and grace to come to soch thinges, yet shuld they ceale tyll their heedes them cleped, although profit and pleasaūce shulde folowe. But trewly other gouernaūce ne other medlinge ought they not to claime, ne the heedes on hem to put. Trewly amonges colinage dare I not come, but if richesse be my meane, sothly ỹe & other bodily goods maketh nigh colinage, ther neuer propinquite ne alyaunce in lyue was, ne shulde haue be, nere it for her medlinge maners, wherfore kindely am I not there leged. Pouert of kinred is behind, richesse suffreth him to passe: truly he saith ỹe come neuer of Japhetes children: wherof I am sorry ỹ Japhetes children for pouert, in no linage ben rekened, & Caines children for riches be maked Japhetes heirs. Alas this is a wōder chaūge bytwene tho twoo foes children, sithen that of Japhetes ofspringe comeden knyghtes, and of Cain discended the line of seruage to his brothers childrē. Lo howe gentillesse & seruage as colins, both discēded out of two bretherne of one body: wherefor I say sothnesse ỹ gentilesse in kinrede maken not gētil linage in succession, without desert of a mannes own selfe. Where is nowe the lyne of Alysaundrie the noble, or els of Hector of Troye? who is discended of right blode of lyne fro kinge Artour: Parde sir Perdicas, whom that kinge Alysandre made to been his heire in Grete, was of no kīges blod, his dame was a tōbystere. Of what kinred been the gentils in our daies: I trow therfore if any good be in gentylesse, it is onely that it semeth a maner of necessyte be input to gentilmen, that they shulden not varien fro the vertues of their auncestres. Certes all maner lynage of men bene euen lyche in birth, for one father maker of all goodnes enformed hem al, and al mortal folke of one sede are greined. Wherto auaunt men of her lynage, in colinage or in elde fathers. Loke nowe the ginning, & to god maker of mans person, there is no clerke ne no worthy in gentilesse: & he that norisheth he his cozare with vices and vnresonable lustes, and leaueth the kinde course, to whiche ende him brought forthe his brythe, trewly he is vngentil, and amonge clerkes may been nempned. And therfore he that wol been gentil, he mote daunten his flesche fro vyces ỹ causen vngentilnesse, and leaue also reignes of wicked lustes, and draw to him vertue, that in al places gentilnesse gentilmen maketh. And so speake I in feminine gendre in generall, of tho persones at the reuerence of one, whom euery wight honoureth, for her bountie an her noblesse ymade her to God so dere, that his moder she became, and she me hath had so great in worship, that I nil for nothinge in open declare that in any thing ayenst her secte maye so wene: for al vertue and al worthinesse of plesaunce in hem haboūdeth. And although I wolde any thing speake, truly I can not, I may finde in yuel of hem no maner mater.

Right with these wordes she stinte of that lamentable melodie, and I ganne with a lyuely herte to praye, if that it were lykynge vnto her noble grace, she wolde her deine to declare me the mater that first was begōne in whiche she lefte and stinte to speake before ne she ganne to singe.

O (ỹ she) this is no newe thynge to me to sene you mēne desyren after mater, whiche your selfe caused to voyde.

Ah good lady (q I) in whom victorye of strength is proued aboue all other thing, after the iudgement of Esdram, whose lord shyp al lignes: Who is that right as Emperour hem cōmaundeth, whether thilke ben not womē, in whose likenesse to me ye aperen. For right as man halte the principalte of al thing vnder his beinge, in the masculyne gender, and no mo genders been there but masculine, and femynyne, all the remnaunte been no genders but of grace, in facultie of grammer. Ryght so in the feminine, the women holden the vpperest degree of al thinges, vnder thilke gendre conteyned. Who bringeth forth kinges, which that been lordes of see and of yerthe, and al peoples of women ben borne: they norishe hem that grastē vines, they make men comforte in their gladde cheres. Her sorowe is death to mannes herte. Without women the beyng of men were impossible. They conne with their swetenesse the cruel hert rauish and make it meke, buxome, & benyng, without violence meuing. In beautie of their eyen, or elles of other manere fetures is all mens desires, ye more than in golde, precycious stones, eyther anye richesse. And in this degree lady your self manye hertes of men haue so bounden, that parfite blisse in womankind to ben men wenen, and in nothinge els. Also lady the goodnesse, the vertue of women, by propertie of discrecion, is so wel knowen, by litelnesse of malice, that desire to a good asker by no waye conne they warne, and ye thanne that woll not passe the kinde werchinge of your sectes by general discrecion, I wotte well ye woll so encline to by prayere, that grace of my requeste shal fully been graunted. Certes (q she) thus for the more parte fareth al mankinde to praye, and to crie after womans grace, and faine manie fantasies to make hertes to encline to your desires: and whan these sely womē frely of their kind beleuen your wordes, and wenen all be gospell the promise of your behestes, than graunt they to you their hertes, and full fyllen your lustus, wherthrough their liberte in maistership that they toforn had is thralled, and so maked souerain and to be praid, ẏ first was seruaunt, and voice of prayer vsed. Anone as filled is your luste manye of you be so trewe, that litell hede take ye of soche kindnesse, but with traisoun anone ye thinke hem begile, and let light of that thynge whiche first ye maked to you wonders dere, so what thig to womē is to loue any wight er she him well know, and haue him proued in many halfe, for euery glittering thing is not golde, and vnder colour of faire speche many vices may be hid and conseled. Therfore I rede no wight to trust on you to rath mens chere, and her speche right gileful is ful ofte, wherfore without good assaye, it is not worthe on many on you to truste: Truly it is right kindly to euery man that thinketh women betraye, and shewen outward al goodnes, tyl he haue his wil performed. Lo the birde is begiled with the mery voice of the foulers whistell. Whan a woman is closed in your nette, thā wol ye causes finden, & beare vnkindnes her on hande, or falset vpō her putte, your own malicious traison with soche thing to excuse. Lo thā han women non other wrech in vengeaūce, but bloder and wepe til hem lyst stint, and sorily her mishap cōplaine, & is put in towenyng that al men ben so vntrew. How oftē haue men thaunged her loues in a litel while, or els for failing their wil in their places hem sette: for frēdship shal be one, & fame with another him list for to haue, & a thirde for delyte, or els were he lost both in packe and in clothes: is this faire, nay God wot? I maye nat tel by thousand partes, the wronges in trechery of soche false people, for make they neuer so good a bonde, all set ye at a myte whan your herte tourneth: And they that wenen for sorow of you dey, the pite of your false hert is flow out of towne. Alas therfore, that euer any woman wolde take any wighte in her grace, til she know at the ful on whome she might at all assayes truste. Women con no more crafte in queinte knowinge, to vnderstande the false disceiuable coniectementes of mannes begilinges. Lo howe it fareth, though ye men gronen and crien, certes it is but disceit, & that preueth wel by thendes in your werking. How manye womē haue bene lorne, and with shame foule shent by longe lastynge time, whiche thorowe mennes gile haue been disceiued? euer their fame shall dure, and their dedes radde and fonge in many londes, that they han done recoueren shal they neuer, but alway been demed lightly, in soche plite ayen shulde they fal, of whiche slaunders and tenes ye false men and wicked bene the very causes, on you by right ought these shames and these reproues all holy discende. Thus

arne ye al nighe vntrewe, for all your faire speche your herte is full fickell. What cause han ye women to dispise? better fruite than they bene, ne swetter spices to your behoue mowe ye not finde, as farre as wordly bodyes stretchen. Loke to their forminge at the makinge of their persones by God in ioye of paradice, for goodnesse of mannes propre bodye were they maked, after the sawes of the bible, rehersing godds wordes in this wise: It is good to mankinde that we make to him an helper. Lo in paradise for youre helpe was this tree graffed, out of whiche all linage of man discendeth: yf a man be noble frute, of noble frute it is sprongen: the blysse of paradise to mennes sory hertes, yet in this tree abydeth. O noble helpes ben these trees, and gentil iewel to ben worshipped of euery good creature: He that hem anoith doth his owne shame, it is a cōfortable perle ayenst al tenes. Euery cōpany is mirthed by their presēt being. Trewly I wist neuer vertue, but a women were therof the rote. What his heauen the worse though, Sarazins on it lien? Is your faith vntrew though rēnogates makē theron leasinges. If the fire doth anye wight bren, blame his own witteȳ put himself so farre in the heate. Is not fyre gentillest and moste element comfortable amonges all other? fire is chefe werker in forthering sustenaunce to mankinde, shal fire bene blamed for it brend a foole naturelly, by his owne stulty witte in steringe. Ah wicked folkes, for your propre malice, and shrewdenesse of your self, ye blame and dispise the precious thinge of your kinde, and whiche thinges amōge other most ye desiren. Trewly Nero and his children been shrewes, that dispisen so their dames. The wickednesse and giling of men, in disclaundring of thilke that most hath hem gladded and pleased, were impossible to write or to nempne. Neuer the later yet I saye he that knoweth a waye, may it lightly passe: eke an herbe proued may safely to smertande sores ben laide: So I say in him that is proued is nothing soch yuels to gesse. But these thinges haue I rehersed to warne you women all at ones, that to lyghtly without good assay ye assenten not to mans speche. The sonne in the day light, is to knowen from the moone that shineth in the nighte. Nowe to thee thy self (ꝙ she) as I haue oft said, I know wel thine herte, thou arte none of all the tofore nempned people, for I know wel the continuaunce of of thy seruice, that neuer sithen I set the a werke, might thy Margarite for pleasaunce, frendeship, ne fairehede of none other be in pointe moued from thin herte, wherfore in to myne housholde hastelye I woll that thou entre, and all the parfyte priuyte of my werkynge make it bee knowe in thy vnderstandynge, as one of my priuy familyers. Thou desirest (ꝙ she) faine to here of tho thiges there I left.

Ye forsothe (ꝙ I) that were to me a great blisse. Nowe (ꝙ she) for thou shalt not wene that womans condicyons for faire speche, soche thinge belongeth.

Thou shalte (ꝙ she) vnderstand first amonge all other thynges, that al the cure of my seruyce, to me in the parfyte blisse in doinge, is desyred in euery nannes herte, be he neuer so moche a wretche, but euery man trauaileth by diuers studye, and seke thilke blysse by diuers waies, but all the endes are knitte in selynesse of desire in the perfite blisse, that is soche ioye, whan men it haue gottten, there liueth no thing more to ben coueited: But how that desire of soche perfectiō in my seruice be kindely set in louers hertes, yet her erronious opiniōs misturne it by falsenesse of wenynge. And although mennes vnderstandinge be misturned, to knowe whiche shoulde been the waye vnto my persone, and whyther it abydeth: yet wote they ther is aloue in euery wight, weneth by that thing that he coueyteth most, he shoulde come to thilke loue, and that is parfite blysse of my seruauntes, but than fulle blysse maye not bee, and there lacke anye thinge of that blisse in anye side. Eke it foloweth than, that he that muste haue ful blysse, lacke no blysse in loue on no side.

Therfore lady (ꝙ I tho) thilke blisse I haue desired, and sothe to forne this my self by wayes of riches, of dignite, of power, & of renome, weninge me in tho thrages had ben thilke blisse, but ayenst the heere it turneth. Whā I supposed best thilke blisse haue get and come to the full purpose of your seruice, sodainly was I hindred, & throwen so fer abacke, that me thinketh an impossible to come there I lefte. I wol (ꝙ she) and therfore haste thou failed, for ȳ wentest not by the hye waye, a litell misgoynge in the

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ginning, causeth mikell errour in the ende, wherefore of thilke blisse thou failedest for hauing of richesse, ne none of thother thinges thou nēpnedest, nowen not make soche perfite blisse in loue, as I shall shewe. Therfore thei be not worthie to thilke blisse, and yet somewhat must been cause and waie to thilke blisse: ergo there is some soche thing, and some waie, but it is little in vsage, and that is not opēly iknow. But what seiest in thyn hart of ỹ seruice, in which by me thou art entred: wenest aught thy self, yet bet in the hie waie to my blisse: I shall so shewe it to thee, thou shalt not contraie the cōtrary.

Good Ladie (ꝙ I) altho I suppose it in my harte, yet would I heare thyne wordes, how ye meanen in this matter. (ꝙ she) that I shall with my good will. The ilke blisse desired, somedeale ye knowen, altho it bee not perfitely, for kindelie entencion leadeth you thereto, but in three maner liuynges, is all soche waies shewed. Euery wight in this worlde to haue this blisse, one of the ilke three waies of liues muste proceade, whiche after opinions of greate Clerkes, arne by names cleped, beastialliche, reasonablich, in vertuous. Manliche is worldliche, beastialich is lustes and delitable, nothing restrained by bridle of reason, all that ioieth and yeueth gladnesse to the hart, and it be ayenst reason, is likened to bestitall liuing, whiche thing followeth lustes & delites, wherfore in soche thing maie not that precious blisse, that is maister of al vertues abide. Your fathers tofore you, haue cleaped soche lustie liuynges, after the flesh passions of desire, whiche are innominable to fore God and man bothe. Then after determinacion of soche wise, wee accorden that soche passions of desire, shull not been nēpned, but holden for absolute from all other liuinges and prouinges, and so liueth into liuinges, manliche & reasonable, to declare the matters begon. But to make thee fullie haue vnderstanding in manliche liuinges, which is holden worldlich in these things, so that ignorance be made no letter. I wol (ꝙ she) nempne these forsaied waies by names and conclusions.

Firste, riches, dignitee, renome, and power, shull in this woorke bee cleaped bodily goodes, for in hem hath been a great throw mannes trust of silines in loue, as in riches sufficiaunce to haue maintained that was begonne, by worldlie cattell in dignitie, honour, and reuerence of hem that werne vnderput, by maistrie thereby to obeie. In renome glory of peoples praising, after lustes in their harte, without hede taking to qualitie and maner of doyng, and in power, by trouth of Lordships mainteinaunce, thing to procede forthe in dooyng. In all whiche thynges a longe tyme, mannes coueitise in commune hath been greatly grounded, to come to ỹ blis of my seruice, but truely thei wer begiled, and for the principall must needes faile, and in helping nowe not auaile. Se why for holdest him not poor that is nedy: yes parde (ꝙ I). And him for dishonored that moche folke dein not to reuerēce. That is soth (ꝙ I) & what him ỹ his mightes failē and nowe not helpen. Certes (ꝙ I) me seemeth of all menne, he should bee holden a wretche. And wenest not (ꝙ she) that he that is little in renome, but rather is out of the praisinges, of mo men then a fewe be not in shame: For sothe (ꝙ I) it is shame & villanie to hym that coueiteth renome, that more folke not praise in name then praise. Soth (ꝙ she) thou saiest sothe, but all these thynges are folowed of soche maner doyng, and wēden in riches sufficiaunce, in power mixt in dignitie worship, and in renome glorie, wherefore thei discended into disceiuable wening, and in that seruice disceite is folowed. And thus in generall, thou & all soche other that so worchen, fallen of my blisse, that ye long han desired, wherfore truly in life of reason, is the hie waie to this blisse, as I thinke more openlie to declare hereafter. Neuer the later, yet in a little to comforte thy harte, in shewyng of what waie thou art entred thy self, and that thy Margarite maie knowe thee set in the hie waie, I wol enforme thee in this wise. Thou hast failed of thy first purpose, bicause thou wēnedest wrong, and leftest the hie waie on thy right side, as thus, thou lokedest on worldly liuyng, and that thyng thee begiled, and lightly therfore as a litle assaie thou longedest, but when I tourned thy purpose, & shewed thee a part of the hie waie, tho thou abode therin, & no death ne ferdnesse of none enemie might thee out of thilke waie reue, but euer one in thine hart, to come to thilk blisse, when thou wer arested, and first time enprisoned, ỹ wer loth to change thy waie, for in thy harte thou wendest to haue been there thou shouldest, & for I had routh to sen thee miscaried, & wist wel thine ablenes my

seruice to soyther and encrease, I come my self without other meane to visite thy persone, in comforte of thy harte: and parde in my commyng thou were greatly gladed, after whiche time, no disease, no care, no tene might moue me out of thy harte. And yet I glad and greatly enpited. How continually thou haddest me in minde, with good auisement of thy conscience, when thy king and his princes, by huge wordes and great, looked after variaunce in thy speach, and euer thou wer redy for my sake, in pleasaunce of that Margarite perle, and many mo other, thy body to oblige i to Marces doing, if any contraried thy sawes, stedfast waie maketh stedfaste harte, with good hope in the ende. Truely I woll that thou it well knowe, for I se thee so set, and not chaunging hart haddest in my seruice, and I made thou haddest grace of thy king, in forgeuenesse of mikel misdeede: to the gracious king, art thou mikel holden, of whose grace and goodnesse sometime hereafter I thinke to enforme, whē I shewe the ground, where as mortall vertue groweth. Who brought ỹ to werke? Who brought this grace about? Who made thy harte hardie? Truely it was I, for haddest thou of me failed, then of this purpose had neuer taken in this wise. And therfore I saie, thou might well trust to come to thy blisse, sithen thy ginnyng hath been heard, but euer graciously after thy hartes desire hath proceaded. Siluer fined with many heates, menne knowen for true, and safely men maie trust in thee alwaie in werkyng. This diseases hath proued, what waie hēce forwarde thou thinkeste to holde. Nowe in good faith Ladie (q I tho) I am now in, me semeth it is the hie waie and the righte. ye forsothe (q she) and nowe I woll disproue thy first waies, by whiche many men wenē to gette thilke blisse. But for as moche as euery hart that hath caught full loue, is tied with queinte knittinges, thou shalt vnderstande that loue, and thilke forsaied blisse toforne declared, in this prouynges, shall hote the knotte in the harte. Well (q I) this impossession I woll well vnderstand. Now also (q she) for the knotte in the harte, must be from one to an other, and I knowe thy desire: I woll thou vnderstande these matters, to been saied of thy self, in disprouyng of thy firste seruice, and in strengthyng of thilk that thou hast vndertake to thy margarite perle. I Goddes halfe (q I) right wel I fele that all this case is possible and true, and therefore I admitted all togither. Vnderstāden well (q she) these termes, and lone no contradiccion thou graunt. If God wol (q I) of all these thinges woll I not faile, and if I graunte contradiccion, I should graunt an impossible, and that wer a foule inconuenience, for whiche thinges, Ladie iwis hereafter I thinke me to kepe.

Well (q she) thou knowest that euery thyng is cause, wherethrough any thyng hath beyng, that is cleaped caused, then of riches causen knot in hart, thilke riches arne cause of the ilke precious thyng beyng: But after the sentēce of Aristotle, euery cause is more in dignitie, then his thyng caused, wherethrough it followeth richelle, to been more in dignitie then thilke knotte, but richesse arne kindly naughtie, badde, and nedy, and the ilke knotte is thyng kindly good, mosse praised and desired: Ergo thyng naughtie, badde, and neadie, in kindly vnderstanding is more worthie, then thyng kindely good, mosse desired and praised: The consequence is false, neades the antecedente mote been of the same condicion. But that richesses been badde, naughtie, and nedie, that woll I proue, wherfore thei mowe cause no such thing, that is so glorious a good: the more richesse thou hasse, the more nede hast thou of help hem to kepe. Ergo thou nedest in richesse, whiche nede thou shouldest not haue if thou hem wantest. Then must riches ben nedy, that in their hauyng maken the nedy to helpes, in suretie thy richesse to kepen, wherthrough followeth richesse to been nedie. Euery thing causyng euills is bad and naughtie: but riches in one causen misease in an other thei mowen not euenly stretchē al about, wherof cometh plee, debate, theft begilinges, but riches to win, whiche thinges been bad, and by richesse arn caused: ergo the ilke richesse been badde, whiche badnesse and nede, been knitte into riches, by a maner of kindlie propertie, and euery cause and caused accordē, so that it followeth the ilke richesse, to haue the same accordaunce, with badnes and mede, that their cause asketh. Also euery thyng hath his beeyng by his cause, then if the cause bee destroyed, the beeyng of caused is banished: And so if richesse causen loue, and richesse weren

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destroyed, the loue should vanishe, but the ilke knotte and it bee true, maie not vanishe for no going of no richesse: Ergo richesse is no cause of the knotte. And many men as I saied, setten the cause of the knotte in richesse, the ilke knitten the richesse, and nothyng the euill: the ilke persones what euer thei been, wenen that riches is moste worthie to be had, and that make thei the cause: and so wene thei thilke riches, be better thā the persone. Commenly soche asken, rather after the quantitie, then after the qualitie, and soche wenen as well by hem self, as by other, that cōiunccion of his life and of his soule is no more precious, but in as mekell as he hath of richesse. Alas, howe maie he holdē soche thynges precious or noble, that neither han life ne soule, ne ordiuaunce of werchyng limmes: soche richesse been more woorthie, when thei been in gatheryng, in departyng ginneth his loue of other mennes prailyng. And auarice gatheryng, maketh bee hated, and neadie to many out helpes: and when leueth the possession of soche gooddes, and thei ginne vanishe, then entereth sorowe and tene in their harts. O bad and straite been thilke, that at their departyng, maketh men tenefull and sorie, and in the gatheryng of hem, make menne neady: Moche folke at ones mowen not togither, moche thereof haue. A good geste gladdeth his hoste, and al his meinie, but he is a bad geste, that maketh his hoste neadie, and to bee aferde of his gestes goyng. Certes (q I) me wondereth therefore, that the common opinion is thus: he is worthe no more then that he hath in cattell. O (q she) loothe thou bee not of that opinion, for if golde or money, or other maner of riches, shinen in thy sight, whose is that? Not thine: and tho thei haue a little beautie, thei bee nothyng in comparison of our kinde, and therefore ye should not set your worthinesse in thing, lower then your self, for the riches, the fairnesse, ỹ worthinesse of thilke goodes, if there be any soche preciousnesse in hē ar not thin, thou madesse hem so neuer, from other thei come to thee, and to other thei shull frō ther: wherfore enbracest ỹ other wightes goodes, as tho thei wer thin? Kinde hath drawe hem by hem self. It is soth the goodes of the yearth, been ordeined in your fode and nourishing, but if thou wolte holde thee apaied with that sufficeth to thy kinde, thou shalt not be in daunger of no soch riches, to kinde sufficeth little thing, who that taketh hede. And if thou wolt algates with superfluitie of riches bee a throted, thou shalt hastelicke be anoied, or els euill at ease. And fairnesse of fieldes, ne of habitaciōs, ne multitude of meine, maie not bee reken ed as riches, that are thine owne, for if thei be bad, it is great sclander and villanie to the occupier, and if thei be good or faire, the matter of the worke man that hē made, is to praise. How should otherwise boūtie be compted for thine, the ilke goodnesse and fairnesse be proper to tho thinges hem self, then if thei be not thin, sorowe not when thei wend, ne glad thee not in pompe and in pride, when thou hem hast for their boūtie and their beauties, cometh out of their owne kind, & not of thine owne persone: as faire been thei in their not hauing, as when thou hastе hem, thei bee not faire, for thou hast hem, but thou hast gettē hem for the faireneſſe of thē self. And there the balance of men, is demed in riches outforthe, wenen me to haue no proper good in them self, but seche it in straunge thinges. Truely the condicion of good wening is in the mistourned, to wene your noblenes be not in your self, but in ỹ goodes and beautie of other thinges. Parde the beastes that hā but feling soules, haue sufficiaunce in their owne self: and ye that been like to God, seke encreasе of sufficiaunce, from so excellente a kinde, of so low thinges, ye do great wrong to him that you made lordes, ouer al erthly thinges, and ye put your worthinesse vnder the nomber of the feete, of lower things and foule, when ye iudge thilke riches to be your worthinesse, then put ye your self by estimacion, vnder thilke foule thinges, and then leue ye the knowing of your self, so be ye viler then any dombe beast, that cometh of shrewde vice. Right so thilk persons that louen none euil, for deare worthines of the persone, but for straunge goodes, and saith the adornement in the knotte lieth in soche thinge, his errour is perilous and shrewde, and he wrieth moche venime, with moche wealth, and that knotte maie not be good, whē he hath it getten. Certes thus hath riches with flickering sighte anoied many: & often when there is a throw out shrewe, he coineth al the gold, all the precious stones ỹ mowen be founden to haue in his vandon, he weneth no wight be worthi to haue soch thinges but he alone. How many hast thou knowe now in late time, ỹ in their richesse,

ſuppoſed ſuffiſaūce haue folowed, and now it is all failed. Ye ladie (q I) that is for miſſe medling, and otherwiſe gouerned thilke richeſſe, then thei ſhould. Yea (q ſhe tho) had not the floode greatlie areiſed, and throwe to hemwarde, bothe grauell and Sande, he had made no medlyng. And right as ſea yeueth flood, ſo drageth ſea ebbe, and pulleth ayen vnder wawe, all the firſte out throwe, but if good piles of noble gouernaunce in Loue, in well meanyng maner, been ſadlie grounded, to whiche hold thilke grauell, as for a while, that ayen lightly mowe not it turne: and if the piles been true, the grauel and ſande woll abide. And certes, full warning in loue ſhalt thou neuer, through hem get ne couer, that lightlie with an ebbe ere thou beware, it will ayen meue.

In richeſſe, many men haue had tenes & diſeaſes, which thei ſhould not haue had, if thereof thei had failed. Through whiche nowe declared, partlie it is ſhewed, that for richeſſe ſhould the knotte in harte, neither been cauſed in one, ne in other: truely knot maie been knitte, and I trow more ſtedfaſt in loue, though richeſſe failed, and els in richeſſe is the knot, and not in hart. And then ſoche a knotte is falſe, when the ſea ebbeth and withdrageth the grauel, that ſoche richeſſe voideth, thilke knotte woll vnknitte. Wherefore no truſte, no waie, no cauſe, no parfite being is in richeſſe, of no ſoche knot therefore an other waie muſt we haue.

HOnor in dignitie is wened, to yeuen a full knotte, Ye certes (q I) and of that opinion ben many, for thei ſaine dignitie, with honour, and reuerence, cauſen hartes to encheinen, and ſo abled to knitte togither, for the excellence in ſoueraint of ſoche degrees.

Now (q ſhe) if dignitie, honoure, and reuerence, cauſen thilke knotte in harte, this knotte is good and profitable. For euery cauſe of a cauſe, is cauſe of thynge cauſed: Then thus, good thynges and profitable, been by dignitie, honour, and reuerence cauſed. Ergo thei accorden, and dignities been good with reuerēces and honour, but contraries mowen not accorden: wherfore by reaſon there ſhould no dignitie, no reuerence, none honour accorde with ſhrewes. but that is falſe: Thei haue been cauſe to ſhrewes, in many ſhrewdneſſe, for with hem thei accorden. Ergo from beginning, to argue ayenwarde, till it come to the laſte concluſion, thei are not cauſe of the knotte. Lo all daie at ye, arne ſhrewes not in reuerēce in honour, and in dignitie? Yes forſothe, rather then the good. Then folowеth it, that ſhrewes rather then good, ſhull been cauſe of this knotte. But of this contray, of al louers is beleued, and for a ſothe openlie determined to holde.

Now (q I) fain would I heare, how ſoch dignities accorden with ſhrewes.

O (q ſhe) that woll I ſhewe in manifolde wiſe. Ye wene (q ſhe) that dignities of office here in your Citee, is as the Sonne, it ſhineth bright withouten any cloude: whiche thynge, when thei comen in the handes of malicious tyrauntes, there cometh moche harme, and more greuaunce therof, then of the wilde fire, though it brende all a ſtreate. Certes, in dignitie of office, the werkes of the occupier, ſhewē the malice and the badneſſe in the perſone, with ſhrewes thei maken manifolde harmes; and moche people ſhamen. How often han rancours, for malice of the gouernour ſhould been maintatned? Hath not then ſoche dignities cauſed debate, rumours, and euils? Yes God wote, by ſoche thinges haue been truſted to, mabe mennes vnderſtandynge encline to many queinte thynges. Thou wotteſt well, what I meane. Ye (q I) therfore as dignitie ſoche thyng in tene i wrought, ſo ayenwarde the ſubſtaunce in dignitie chaunged, relied to bryng ayen good plite in dooyng. Do waie, do waie (q ſhe) if it ſo betide, but that is ſeld that ſoche dignitie is betake in a good mannes gouernaunce. What thyng is to recken in the dignities goodneſſe? Parde the bountie and goodneſſe is hers, that vſē it in good gouernaunce, and therefore cometh it, that honour and reuerence, ſhould been doen in to dignitie, bicauſe of encreaſyng vertue in the occupier, and not to the ruler, bicauſe of ſoueraintie in dignitie. Sithen dignitie maie no vertue cauſe, who is worthie worſhip for ſoche goodneſſe? Not dignitie, but perſone that maketh goodneſſe in dignitie to ſhine. This is wonder thyng (q I) for me thinketh, as the perſone in dignitie is worthie honour for goodneſſe, ſo tho a perſone for badneſſe, magre hath deſerued, yet the dignitie leneth to be commended. Let be (q ſhe) thou erreſt right foule, dignitie with badneſſe, is helper to performe the felonous

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doing: parde wer it kindly good, or any pro-pertie of kindly vertue, hadden in hem self, shrewes should hem neuer haue, with hem should thei neuer accorde. Water & fire that been contrarious, mowen not togider been assembled, kinde woll not suffre soche con-traries to ioyn. And sithen at ye by experi-ence in dooyng, we seen that shrewes haue hem more often, then good men, liker maist thou be, that kindly good in soch things, is not appropred. Parde wer thei kindly good as well one as other, shoulden euenliche in vertue of gouernance been worthe: but one faileth in goodnesse, an other doeth the con-trary, and so it sheweth kindly goodnesse, in dignitie not be groũded. And this same rea-son (q she) maie bee made in generall, on all the bodily goods, for thei comẽ oft to throw out shrewes. After this he is stronge, ỹ hath might to haue greate burthens, and he is light & swift, that hath soueraintie in ron-ning to passe other, right so he is a shrew on whom shrewde thinges and bad, han mosse werchig. And right as Philosophy maketh Philosophiers, and my seruice maketh lo-uers: right so if dignities weren good or ver tuous, thei should makẽ shrewes good, and tourne her malice, and make hem be vertu-ous, but that dooe thei not, as it is proued, but causen rãcour and debate. Ergo thei be not good, but vtterly bad. Had Nero neuer been Emperor, should neuer his dame haue be slaine, to maken open the priuitie of his engendrure. Herodes for his dignitie, slewe many children. The dignitie of king Iohn would haue destroied all Englande. There-fore mobell wisedome and goodnes bothe, nedeth in a persone, the malice in dignitie, slily to bridell, & with a good bit of aresse to withdrawe, in case it would praunce other-wise thẽ it should: truly ye yeue to dignities wrõgful names in your cleping. Thei should hete not dignitie, but monstre of badnesse, & maintetner of shrewes. Perde shine ỹ sonne neuer so bright, and it bring forth no heat, ne seasonably the herbes out brynge of the yearth, but suffre frostes and cold, & therath baraine to ligge, by time of his compas, in circuite about, ye would wonder & dispreise that sonne. If the moone be at full, and she-weth no light, but dark and dimme to your sight appereth, & make distrucciõ of the wa-ters, wol ye not suppose it be vnder cloude, or in clips? And ỹ some priuie thing vnkno-wen to your wittes, is cause of soche cõtra-rious dooyng. Then if clerkes that han full insight, and knowing of soche impedimen-tes, enforme you of the soth, very idiotes ye been, but if ye yeuen credence to thilke cler-kes wordes. And yet it doth me tene, to seen many wretches reioycen, in soch many pla-nettes. Truly little con thei on Philosophy or els on my lore, that any desire hauẽ soche lighting planettes, in that wise any more to shewe. Good ladie (q I) tell ye me how ye mean in these things. Lo (q she) ỹ dignities of your citee, sonne and Moone, nothing in kinde shew their shining as thei should. For the sonne made no brenning heate in loue, but freled enuie in mẽs hartes, for feblenes of shining heate: and the Mone was about vnder an old cloud, the liuynges by waters to destroye. Ladie (q I) it is supposed thei had shined as thei should. Ye (q she) but now it is proued at the full, their beutie in kind-ly shining failed, wherefore dignitie of him selue, hath no beautie in faireneslle, ne driu-eth not awaie vices, but encreaseth, and so be thei no cause of the knotte. Now se in good truthe, holde ye not soche sonnes wor-thie of no reuerence and dignities, worthie of no worship, that maketh men to dooe the more harmes? I not (q I). No (q she) & thou se a wise good man, for his goodnesse and wisenesse, wolt thou not doe hym worship? Thereof he is worthie. That is good skil (q I) it is dewe to soche, bothe reuerence and worshippe to haue. Then (q she) a shrewe for his shrewdnesse, althyo he be put forth toform other for ferde, yet is he worthie for shrewd-nesse, to bee vnworshipped: of reuerence no parte is he worthie to haue, to contrarious dooyng belongeth, and that is good skille. For right as he bee smiteth the dignities, thilk same thing ayenward him smiteth, or els should smite. And ouer this thou wosse well (q she) that fire in euery place, heateth where it be, and water maketh weat: why? For kindly werking is so iput in hem, to do soche thinges: for euery kindely in werking sheweth his kind. But though a wight had been Maior of your Citee, many Winter to-gether, and come in a straũge place, there he were not knowen, he should for his dignitie haue no reuerence. Then neither worship ne reuerence, is kindelie proper in no digni-tie, sithen thei shoulden doen their kinde, in soche dooyng if any were. And if reuerence ne worshippe, kindely be not sette in digni-ties, and thei more therein been shewed thã

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goodnesse, for that in dignitie is shewed, but it proueth that goodnesse, kindlie in hē is not grounded. Iwis neither worship ne reuerence, ne goodnesse in dignitie, dooen none office of kind, for thei haue none soche propertie, in nature of dooyng, but by false opinion of the people. Lo, howe sometyme thilke that in your Citee werne in dignitie noble, if thou liste hem nempne, thei been nowe ouertourned, bothe in worshippe, in name, and in reuerence, wherefore soche dignities, haue no kindely werchyng of worshiip, and of reuerence, he that hath no worthinesse on it self. Now it riseth, and now it vanisheth, after the variaunte opinion in false hartes of vnstable people.

Wherefore, if thou desire the knot of this iewelle, or els if thou wouldest suppose, she should set the knotte on thee, for soche maner of dignitie, then thou wenest beautie or goodnesse of the ilke somewhat, encreaseth the goodnesse or vertue in the bodie: but dignitie of hem self been not good, ne yeuen reuerence ne worship by their owne kinde, howe should thei then, yeue to any other a thing, that by no waie mow thei haue hem self? It is seen in dignitie of the Emperour, and of many mo other, that thei mowe not of hem selue, kepe their worship ne their reuerēce, that that in a little while, it is now vp, and now doun, by vnstedfast hartes of ȳ people. What bountie mowe thei yeue, that with Cloude, lightlie leaueth his shinyng? Certes, to the occupier is mokell apeired, sithen soche doing doeth vilanie, to him that maie it not maintain, wherfore thilke way to the knotte is croked: and if any desire to come to ȳ knot, he must leaue this waie on his left side, or els shal he neuer come there.

Vaileth aught (q she) power of mighte, in maintenaunce of worthie, to come to this knot. Parde (q I) ye, for hartes been rauished from soche maner thyngs. Certes (q she) though a fooles harte, is with thyng rauished, yet therfore is no generall cause of the powers, ne of a liber parfite harte, to be lobed after. Was not Nero the moste shrewe, one of thilke that men rede, and yet had he power to make Senatours, Justices, and Princes of many landes? was not that greate power? yes certes (q I). well (q she) yet might he not helpe hymself out disease, when he gan fall. Howe many ensamples canst thou remember of kynges, greate and noble, and huge power holden, and yet thei might not keepe hem selue from wretchednesse. How wretched was kyng Henry Curmantil ere he diede? He had not so moche as to couer with his members: and yet was he one of the greatest kynges, of all the Normādes offspring, a moste possession had. O, a noble thing and cleare is power, that is not founden mightie to kepe hymself.

Now truelie a greate foole is he, that for soche thyng, would set the knotte in thyne harte. Also power of realmes, is not thilke greatest power, emonges the worldlie powers reckened: And if soche powers han wretchednesse in hemself, it foloweth other powers of febler condition, to been wretched, and then that wretchednesse, should been cause of soch a knot. But euery wight that hath reason, wote well that wretchednesse by no waie, maie been cause of none soche knotte, wherefore soche power is no cause. That powers haue wretchenesse in hem self, maie right lightly been preued.

If power lacke on any side, on that side is no power, but no power is wretchednes: for all bee it so, the power of Emperous or kinges, or els of their realmes (which is the power of the Prince) stretchen wide & brod, yet besides is there mokell folke, of whiche he hath no commaundemente ne lordeship, and there as lacketh his power, his nonpower entereth, where vnder springeth, that maketh hem wretches. No power is wretchednesse, & nothyng els: but in this maner hath kinges, more porcion of wretchednes, thā of power. Truly soche powers been vnmightie, for euer thei ben in drede, how the ilke power from lesyng, maie be keped of sorowe, so drede sorily prickes, euer in their hartes: Little is the power, whiche careth and ferdeth it self to maintaine. Unmightie is that wretchednesse, whiche is entered by the ferdfull wenyng of the wretche hym self: and knotte imaked by wretchednesse, is betwene wretches, and wretches all thyng bewailen: wherefore the knotte should bee bewailed, and there is no soche parfit blisse that we supposed at the ginnyng. Ergo power in nothing, should cause soch knottes. Wretchednesse, is a kindlie propetie in soche power, as by waie of drede, whiche thei mowe not eschue, ne by no waie liue in sikernesse. For thou woste welle (q she) he is nought

nought mighty, that wolde not done that he may not don ne performe. Therfore (q I) these kinges and lordes that han suffysaũce at the ful of men and other thinges, mowẽ well been holden mighty: their commaundemẽtes been done, it is neuermore denied. Foole (q she) or he wot him selfe mightye or wotte it not: for he is nought mighty, that is blinde of his might and wotte it not, That is soth (q I). Than yf he wot it, he must nedes been a drade to lesen it. He that wote of his might is in doute that he mote nedes lese, and so leadeth him drede to been vnmighty. And if he retche not to lese, litel is that worth that of the lesing reason retcheth nothinge: and if it were mighty in power or in strength, the lesing shulde ben withset, and whan it cometh to the lesinge he may it not withsitte. Ergo thilke might is leude and naughty. Soch mightes arne ylike to postes and pillers that vpright stonden, and great might han to beare manye charges, and yf they croke on any side, litel thinge maketh hem ouerthrowe. This is a good ensãple (q I) to pillers and postes that I haue sene ouerthrowed my self, and hadden they been vnderput with anye helpes, they had not so lightlye fal. Than holdest thou him myghty that hath many men armed and may seruauntes, and euer he is adradde of hem in his herte, & for he gasteth hem somtime he mote the more feare haue. Comenly he that other agasteth, other in him ayenward werchen the same: and thus warnished mote he be, and of warnishe the houre drede: Litel is that might and right leude, who so taketh hede. Than semeth it (q I) that soche famulers aboute kinges & great lordes, shull great might haue. Althoughe a sipher in augrim haue no might in significacion of it selue, yet he yeueth power in significaciõ to other, and these clepe I the helpes to apost, to kepe him from fallinge. Certes (q she) thilke skilles ben leude. Why? but if the shores been well grounded, the helps shullẽ sliden and suffre the charge to fal, her myght lytel auaileth. And so me thinketh (q I) that a poste alone stondynge vpright vpon a basse, maye lenger in great burthen endure, than croked pillers for all their helpes, and her grounde be not siker. That is sothe (q she) for as the blind in bearing of the lame ginne stomble, bothe shuld fal, right so soch pillers so enuironed with helpes in falinge of the grounde, faileth all togider, howe ofte than soche famulers in their most pride of prosperite been sodainly ouerthrowen. Thou haste knowe manye in a moment so ferre ouerthrowe, that couer might they neuer, whan the heuinesse of soche faling cometh by case of fortune, they mowe it not eschewe: and might & power, if ther wer any shulde of strẽght soche thinges voide and weiue, & so it is not. Lo than whiche things is this power that tho men han it they ben agast, and in no time of full hauing be thei siker: & if they wold weyue drede, as they mowe not, lytel is in worthines. Fye therfore on so noughty thing any knot to cause. Lo in aduersitie, thilke been his foes that glosed & semed frẽdes in welth thus arne his familiers his foes & his enemies: And nothing is werse ne more mighti for to anoy, than is a familier enemye, and these thinges may they not weiue, so treuly their might is not worth a cresse. And ouer al thinge, he that may not withdrawe the bridel of his fleshly lustes and his wretched complaintes (now thinke on thy self) trewly he is not mighty: I can sene no way that lithe to the knotte. Thilke people thã that setten their hertes vpon soch mightes and powers, often ben begiled. Parde he is not myghty that may do any thinge, that another may done him the selue, and that men haue as greate power ouer hym as he ouer other. A iustice that demeth men, ayẽward hath ben often demed. Buserus slew his gestes, and he was slayne of Hercules his gest. Hugest betraished many menne, & of Collo was he betraied. He ẏ with swerde smiteth, with swerde shalbe smitten. Than gan I to studien a while on these thinges, and made a contenaunce with my hande in maner to been huishte. Nowe let sene (q she) me thinketh somwhat there is within thy soule, ẏ troubleth thy vnderstanding, saye on what it is. (q I tho) me thinketh that although a man by power haue soche might ouer me as I haue ouer other, that disproueth no might in my persone, but yet maye I haue power and might neuer the later. Se now (q she) thine owne leudenesse: He is mighty that maye without wretchednesse, and he is vnmighty that may it not withsitte: but than he that might ouer the, and he woll put on the wretchednes, thou might it not with sitte. Ergo thou seest they selfe what foloweth. But nowe (q she) wouldest thou not skorne and thou se a flye han power to

don harme to an other flie, and thilke haue no might ne ayenturninge him selfe to defende. yes certes (q I). Who is a frailer thinge (q she) than the fleshlye body of a man, ouer whiche haue often tyme flyes; and yet lasse thing than a flye mokel myght in greuaunce and anoyenge, withouten anye wythstittynge, for all thylke mannes mightes. And sythen thou seest thine fleshly body in kindely power fatle, howe shoulde than the accident of a thynge been in more surette of being than substancial: wherfore thilke thinges that we clepe power, is but accidēt to the fleshly body, and so they maie not haue that suretie in might, which wāteth in the substanciall body: why there is no waye to the knotte, that loketh aryght after the hye waie as he shulde.

Verelye it is proued that richesse, dignite, and power bē not trewe way to the knotte, but as rath by suche thinges ꝑ knotte, to be vnbosid: wherfore on these thynges I rede no wight trust, to gette anye good knotte. But what shulde we saye of renome in the peoples mouthes, shuld that ben any cause what supposest thou in thin hert?

Certes (q I) yes I trowe, for your flye reasons I dare not safely it saye. Than (q she) wol I proue that shrewes as rathe shul ben in the knotte as the good, and that wer ayenst kinde. Fayne (q I) woulde I that hear, me thinketh wōder how renome shuld as well knitte a shrewe as a good persone: renome in euery degree hath auaunced, yet wist I neuer the contrarye: shulde than renome accorde with a shrewe? It maye not sinken in my stomake till I here more. Now (q she) haue I nat said alwayes, that shrewes shul not haue the knotte. What nedeth (q I) to reherse that any more, I wotte wel euery wight by kindely reason, shrewes in knittinge woll eschewe. Than (q she) the good ought thilke knotte to haue. How els (q I). It were greate harme (q she) that the good were weued and put out of espoire of the knot, if he it desired. O (q I) alas, on suche thinge to thinke, I wene that heuen wepeth to se soch wronges here ben suffred on yearth: the good ought it to haue and no wight elles. The goodnesse (q she) of a person maye not ben knowe outforth, but by renome of the knowers, wherefore he must be renomed of goodnes to come to the knot. So muste it be (q I) or elles all losse that we carpen. Sothly (q she) that were greate harme, but if a good man might haue his delyres in seruice of thilke knot, & a shrewe to be beined, and they been not knowen in general but by lacking and praising and in renome, and so by the consequence it folweth, a shrewe ben praised and knit, and a good to be forsake and vnknit. Ah (q I) tho haue ye lady ben her abouten, yet wold I se by grace of our argumentes better declared, howe good and bad do accorden by lacking and praising, me thinkethe it ayēst kinde. Nay (q she) and that shalt thou se as yerne: these elementes han contrarious qualites in kinde, by whiche they now not accorde no more than good and bad: and in qualites they accorde, so that contraries by qualite, accorden by qualyte. Is not yearthy drie, and water that is nexte and bytwene therth is wete, drie and wete been contrary and mowen not accorde, and yet this discordaunce is bounde to accorde by cloudes, for bothe elements ben colde. Right so the eyre that is nexte the water is weate, and eke it is hot. This eyre by his heate contrarieth water ꝑ is colde, but thilke contrariousnesse is oned by moisture, for both be they moist. Also the fyre that is nexte the yerth, and it encloseth al about, is drye, wherthrough it cōtrarieth yearth that is wete: and in hete they accorde, for both they ben hote. Thus by these accordaunces, discordantes ben toyned and in a maner of accordaunce they accorden by connection, that is knittinge together, of that accorde cometh a maner of melodye that is right noble. Right so good and bad arne contrarie in doinges, by lackinge and praisinge: good is bothe lached and praised of some, and badde is bothe lached and praised of some: wherfore their contrariousnesse accorde bothe by lacking and praising. Thā folweth it though good be neuer so mokel praised, oweth more to ben knit than the bad: or elles bad for the renome that he hath must be takē as wel as the good, and that oweth not. No forsothe (q I) Well (q she) than is renome no waye to the knot: lo foole (q she) how clerkes writen of soche glorie of renome. O glorye, glorye, thou art none other thinge to thoulandes of folke, but a great sweller of eares. Manye one hath had ful great renome by falle opinīō,

of

of variaunt people: And what is fouler than folke wrongefully to been praised, or by malice of the people giltlesse lacked? Nedes shame foloweth thereof to hem that wyth wronge prayseth, and also to the desertes praised, and vylanye and reprofe of him that disclaundreth.

Good childe (q she) what echeth soche renome to the conscience of a wise man, that loketh and measureth his goodnesse, not by sleuelesse wordes of the people, but by sothfastnesse of conscience: by God nothinge. And if it be faire a mannes name be eched by moche folkes praising, and fouler thing that mo folke not praisen. I said to the a litel here beforne, that no folke in straunge coūtreies nought praisen, soch renom may not comē to their eares, bycause of vnknowing, and other obstacles, as I saide: Wherfore more folke not praisen, & that is right foule to him that renome desireth, to wete lesse folke praisen than renome enhaunce. I trowe the thancke of a people is naught worth, in remembraunce to take, ne it procedeth of no wise iugement, neuer is it stedfast pardurable: It is veine & sleynge, with winde wasteth and encreaseth. Trewly soch glory ought to be hated. If gentillesse be a clere thynge, renome and glorie to enhaunce, as in reckening of thy linage, thā is gentillesse of thy kinne, for why it semeth that gentillesse of thy kinne, is but praysinge and renome that come of thine auncestres desertes, and if so be that praisinge and renome of their desertes, make their clere gentilnesse, than mote they nedes ben gentill for their gentil dedes, and not thou: for of thy self cometh not soche maner gentillesse, praisinge of thy desertes. Than gentillesse of thine auncestres that foraine is to the, maketh the not gētil, but vngētil and reproued, and if thou continuest not their gentillesse. And therfore a wise man ones said: Better is it thy kinne to been by the genteled, then thou to glorysye of thy kinnes gentillesse, and hast no desert thereof thy sefe.

How passing is the beautie of fleshly bodyes: more flyttinge than mouable floures of sōmer. And if thine eyen weren as good as the Lynx, that may sene thorowe many stone walles, both & faire and foule in their entrailes, of no maner hew shulde apere to thy sight, that were a foule sight. Than is fairenesse by feblesse of eyen, but of no kīd, wherfore thilke shuldbe no way to the knot: Whan thilke is went the knot wendeth after. Lo now at al proues, none of al these thinges mowe parfitly ben in vnderstanding, to ben waye to the durynge blisse of the knotte. But nowe to conclusion of these maters, herkeneth these words. Very sōmer is know from the winter: in shorter course draweth the dayes of Decēber, then in ẏ moneth of June: The springes of May faden and folowen in Octobre. These thinges be not vnbounden from their olde kind they haue not lost her worke of their proper estate. Men of voluntarious wil withsitte that heuens gouerneth. Other thinges suffren thinges paciently to werche: Man in what estate he be, yet wolde he ben chaunged. Thus by queint thynges blisse is desired, and the fruit that cometh of these springes, nis but anguis and bitter, all though it be a whil swete, it may not be with hold, hastely they departe: thus all daye faileth thinges that fooles wēde. Right thus hast thou faileth in thy firste weninge. He that thinketh to saile, and draw after the course of that sterre, de polo autartico, shall he neuer come Northward to the contrary sterre of polus articus, of whiche thinges if thou take kepe, thy first out waye goinge, prison and exil may be cleped. The grounde falsed vndernethe, and so haste thou fayled. No wight I wene blameth him that stiteth in misgoing, and secheth redy way of his blisse

Nowe me thenketh (q she) that it suffiseth in my shewing the wayes, by dignite, richesse, renome, and power, if thou loke clerely arne no wayes to the knotte.

Every argumente lady (q I tho) that ye han maked in these fore nempned matters, me thinketh hem in my full wytte conceiued, shall I no more if God will in the contrarie be begiled: But faine wolde I and it were your will, blisse of the knotte to me wer declared, I might fele the better howe my herte might assēte to poursue thende in seruice, as he hath begonne. O (q she) there is a melodye in heauen, whiche clerkes clepen armony, but that is not in breaking of voice, but it is a maner swete thīg of kindly werchinge, that causeth ioy out of nōbre to recken, and that is ioined by reason and

by wisedome, in a quantite of proporcion of knitting. God made all thing in reason and in witte of porporcion of melodye, we mowe not suffise to shewe. It is written by great clerkes and wise, that in erthly thinges lightly by studye, & by trauile, the knowinge may be getten: but of soche heuenly melodye, mokel trauaile woll bringe out in knowing right lytel. Swetnese of this paradyse hath you rauished, it semeth ye slepten, rested from al other diseases so kindely is your hertes therin ygrounded. Blisse of two hertes in full loue knitte, maye not aright ben imagined: euer is their contemplacio in ful of thoughty study to plesaūce, matter in bringing comforte eueriche to other. And therfore of erthelye thinges, mokel matter lyghtly cometh in your lerning. Knowledge of vnderstanding that is nighe after ye, but not so nigh the couetise of knittinge in your hertes: More souerain desire hath euery wight in litel hering of heuenly conninge, than of mokell materiall purpoles in yerth. Right so it is in propertie of my seruauntes, that they den more affyched in steringe of lytel thinge in his desyre, thā of mokel other matter, lasse in his conscience. This blisse is a maner of sowne delycious, in a queint voice touched, and no dynne of notes: there is none impression of breakinge laboure. I cānne it not otherwise nempne, for wānting of priuie wordes, but paradyse terrestre ful of delicious melodye, withoutē trauaile in sown perpetuell seruice, in ful ioye coueited to endure. Only kinde maketh hertes in vnderstandinge so to slepe, that otherwise may it not ben nēpned, ne in other manere names for likynge swetnesse can I nat it declare, all sugre and honye, al minstralsy and melodie been but soote and galle in comparison, by no maner proporcion to reken, in respecte of this blisful ioye. This armonye, this melodye, this perdurable ioye may nat be in doinge, but betwene heuens and elemētes, or twey kindely hertes, full knit in trouth of naturell vnderstanding, withouten wening and disceit, as heuens and planettes, whiche thinges continually for kindely accordaunces, forsleteth al cōtrarious meuinges, that in to passyue diseases maye sowne, euermore it thristeth after more werkinge. These thinges in proporcion be so wel ioyned, that it vndoth al thing, which in to badnes by any way may be accōpted. Certes (q I) this is a thing precious & noble. Alas that falsenesse euer or wantrust shuld euer be mainteined, this ioy to void. Alas that euer any wretch shulde thorow wrathe or enuy, ianglīg dare make to shoue this medlody so farre aback that openly dare it not bē vsed: turely wretches been fulfylled with enuy and wrathe, and no wight els. Flebring & tales in soche wretches dare appere opēly in euery wightes eare w̄ ful mouth so charged, mokel malyce moued many innocentes to shēde, God wold their soule therwith were strangeled. Lo, trouth in this blisse is hid & ouer al vnder couer him hideth: He dare nat come a place for waiting of shrewes. Cōmenly badnes, goodnes amaistereth w̄ my self and my soule this ioy wolde I bye, yf the goodnesse wer as moch as ỹ nobli in melodi. O (q she) what goodnesse may be a compted more in this material world, truly non ỹ shalt thou vnderstande. Is not euery thing good that is cōtrariant & distroiēg yuel: How els (q I) Enuye, wrathe, and falsenes ben generall (q she) and that wot euery mā beyng in his right mind, the knotte the which we haue in this blesse, is contrariaunt & distroieth soche maner yuelles. Ergo it is good, what hath caused anye wight to do anye good dede: Fynd me any good, but if this knot be the chefe cause: Nedes mote it be good, that causeth so many good dedes. Euery cause is more, and worthier than thing caused, and in that mores possession, all thynges lesse been compted. As the kinge is more than his people, & hath in possessiō al his realme after: Right so the knot is more than all other goodes, thou might reckon al thinges lasse, and that to him longeth owethe in to his mores causes of worship and of wil do tourne, it is elles rebel and out of his mores defending to boyd. Ryght so of euery goodnesse in to the knot and in to the cause of his worship oweth to tourne. And trewly euery thinge that hath beynge profitablye is good, but nothing hath to ben more profitably than this knot: Kynges it maintaineth, and hem their powers to maintaine: It mabethe misse to bene amended, with good gouernaunce in doynge. It closeth hertes so togider, that rācour is out threst̄e. Who that it lengest kepeth, lengest is gladed. I trow (q I) heretykes, and misse meaning people hence forward wol maintaine this knotte, for therthrough shull they ben maintained, and vtterly woll tourne, and leaue

leaue their olde yuel vnderstãding, & knitte this goodnes, and profer so ferre in seruice that name of seruauntes might they haue. Their iangles shal cease, me thinketh hem lacheth mater now to alege. Certes (q̃ loue) if they of good will thus tourned as thou sayst wolẽ trewly persourme, yet shull they be abled party of this blisse to haue: & they wol not, yet shul my seruauntes the werre wel susteyne in min helpe of mayntenaũce to the end. And they for they? good trauaile shullen in reward so ben meded, that endelesse ioy body and soule togider in this shullen abyden, there is euer action of blisse withouten possible corrupcion, there is action perpetuel in werke without trauaile, there is euerlasting passyse withouten any of labour: continuel plite without cealing coueited to endure. No tonge may tell ne herte maye thinke the leesse pointe of this blisse. God bringe me thider (q̃ I than). Continueth wel (q̃ she) to the ende, & thou might not fail than, for though thou spede not yeare, yet shal the passiõ of thy martred lyse ben writẽ, and radde tofore me the great Iupiter that God is of routhe, an highe in ỹ holownesse of heuẽ, ther he sit in his tron and euer thou shalt forward ben holden amonge all these heuins for a knight, that mightest with no penaunce ben dicomfited He is a verie martyr that liuingely goinge is gnawen to the bones. Certes (q̃ I) these ben good wordes of comforte, a litell mine hert is reioysed in a mery wise. ye (q̃ she) and he that is in heuẽ selith more ioye, thã whan he firste herde therof speke. So it is (q̃ I) but wist I the soth, that after disease comforte wolde folowe with blisse, so as ye haue often declared, I wold wel suffre this passion with ỹ better chere, but my thought ful forow is endlesse, to thinke howe I am cast out of a welefare, and yet daineth not this ruel none herte none hede to me warde throwe, whiche thinges wold gretly me by wayes of comforte disporte, to weten in my selfe a litel with other me ben ymoned: and my sorowes peisen not in her balaunce the weight of a pease: Slinges of her daunger, so heuily peysen, they drawe my causes so hye, that in her eyen they semen but light and right lytell.

O, for (q̃ she) heuen with sheres that koule cloudes maken and darke wethers, with great tempestes and huge, maketh the mery dayes with softe shinninge sonnes. Also there with draweth floures and beaute of herbes & of yearth. The same yeres maketh springes & iolyte in were so to renouel with peinted coloures, that earthe semed as gay as heuẽ. Sees that blasteth & with wawes throweth shippes, of which the liuing creatures for great peril of hem dreden: right so the same sees maketh smothe waters and golden sailing, and comforteth hem, with noble hauã that firste were so ferde. Halle ỹ not (q̃ she) lerned in thy youth that Iupiter hath in his warderobe bo the garmentes of ioye and of sorowe: what wolt thou howe soone he wol turne of thee that garmente of care, and clothe the in blisse: Parde it is not ferre fro the. Lo an olde prouerbe alleged by many wise: whan bale is greatest, than is bote a nie boze. Wherof wylt thou dismaye: hope wel and serue well, and that shal the saue, with thy good byleue. Ye, ye (q̃ I) yet se I not by reason howe this blisse is cõming, I wot it is contingent, it maye fal an other. O (q̃ she) I haue molsel to done to clere thine vnderstãding and voide these errours out of thy mynde, I woll proue it by reason thywo maie not alway enduren. Euery thinge kindely (q̃ she) is gouerned & ruled by the heuenly bodies, whiche hauen ful werching here on erth, and after course of these bodyes, all course of your doynges here ben gouerned and ruled by kind. Thou wotte well by cours of planettes all your dayes procedẽ, & to euerich of singuler houres be enterchaunged stondemele about, by submitted worchyng naturelly to suffre, of whiche chaunges cometh these transitorie tymes, that maketh reuoluing of your yeres thus stoundmele, euery hath ful might of woorchinge, till all seuen han hadde her cours about. Of whiche worchinges and possession of houres, the dayes of the weke haue take her names, after denominacion in these seuen planettes, Lo your sõday ginneth at the firste houre after noone on the saturday, in whiche houre is thã the sonne in ful might of worching, of whõ sonday taketh this name. Ner him soloweth Venus, and after Mercurius, & than the Moone, so than Saturnus, after whõ Iouis & than Mars & ayen than the Sonne, & so forthe be. xxiiii. houres togider, in whiche houre ginning in the. ii. day stãte ỹ Moon, as maister for that time to rule, of whõ mõday taketh his name, and this course soloweth of al other dayes generally in doinge. This

course of nature of these bodyes chaūging, stintē at a certaine terme, limitted by their first kind, & of hem al gouernemētes in this elementedworld proceden, as in sprynges, constellaciōs, engēdrures, & al that folowen kind and reason, wherfore the course that foloweth sorow and ioy, kindely moten entrechangen their tymes, so that alway on wele as alway on wo may not endure. Thy? seest thou appertely thy sorowe into wele mote ben chaunged, wherfore in soche case to better side euermore enclin thou shuldest Trewly nerte the ende of sorowe anon entreth ioye, by maner of necessite, it wol ne may non other betide, and so thy cōtigence is disproued: if thou holde this opinion any more, thy wit is right leud. Wherfore in ful concluciō of al this, thilke Margarite thou desirest, hath bē to the dere in thy herte, and for her hast thou suffred many thoughtfull diseases, hereafter shall be cause of mokell myrth and ioy, and loke how glad cāst thou bene, and cease al thy passed heuinesse with manyfolde ioyes. And than wol I as blithely here the speaken thy myrthes in ioy, as I nowe haue yharde thy sorowes and thy complaintes. And if I nowe in aughte thy ioy encrease, by my trouthe on my side, shal nat be leased for no maner trauaile, that I with al my mightes, right blithly wol helpe and euer ben redy you both to please. And thā thāked I that lady with al goodly maner that I worthely coude, & trewly I was greatly reioysed in myne herte, of her faire beheestes, and profered me to be slawe in all that she me wold ordein whyl my life lested.

Me thinketh (q I) that ye haue right wel declared, that way to the knot shuld not been in none of these disprouīg thinges, & nowe order of our purpose this asketh, ỳ ye shuld me shew if any way be thither, & which thilke way shuld ben, so ỳ openly may be sey ỳ very ỳe way in ful cōfutiō of these other thiges

Thou shalt (q she) vnderstande, that one of thre lyues (as I firste said) euery creature of mankind is sprongen, and so forth proceedeth. These lyues bē thorow names departed in thre maner of kindes, as bestialliche, manlyche, and resonabliche, of whyche two ben vsed by fleshely body, and the thirde by his soule. Bestal amonge resonables is forboden in euery lawe and euery secte, bothe in christen & other, for euery wight dispiseth hem that lyueth by lustes and delites, as him that is thral and bounden seruaūte to thinges right foule, soche been compted werse than men, he shal nat in their degree ben rehened, ne for soche one alowed. Heritikes saine they chosen life bestial, that voluptuoussye lyuē, so that (as I first saide to the) in manly and resonable liuinges, our mater was to declare, but manly lyfe in lyuing after flesh, or els fleshly waies to chese may nat blisse in this knot be cōquered, as by reason it is proued. Wherfore by resonable life he must nedes it haue sithe away is to this knotte, but nat by the first tway lyues, wherfore nedes mote it bē to the thirde and for to lyue in flesshe but nat after flesshe, is more resonablich than mālyche rehened by clerkes. Therfore how this way cometh in I wol it blithely declare.

Se nowe (q she) that these bodily goods of manliche liuinges, yelden sorowfully stoūdes and smertāde houres. Who so wel remēbre him to their endes, in their worchinges they ben thoughtful & sorie. Right as a bee ỳ hathe had his honie, anone at his flighte beginneth to stinge: So thilke bodyly goodes at the laste mote away, and than sting they at her goinge, wherthrough he entreth and clene bodeth al blisse of this knot.

Forsothe (q I) me thinketh I am wel serued, in shewing of these wordes. Although I hadde lyttell in respecte amonge other greate and worthy, yet had I a faire parcel, as me thought for the tyme, in fortherīg of my sustenaunce, whiche while it dured, I thought me hauing mokel hony to mine estate. I had richesse sufficiauntly to weiue nede, I had dignite to be reuerēced in worship. Power me thought that I had to kepe fro min enemies, & me semed to shine inglory of renome, as manhode asketh in meane, for no wighte in myne administracyon, coude non yuels ne trechery by sothe cause on me putte. Lady your selue weten wel, that of tho confederacies maked by my souerains, I nas but a seruaunt, and yet mokel meane folke woll fully ayenste reason thilke maters mainteine, in which maintenaunce glorien them self, and as often ye hauen saide, therof ought nothing in yuel to be laide to me wardes, sithen as repentaunt I am tourned, and no more I thinke, neither tho thiges ne none soch other to sustene, but vtterly distroye without medling maner, in all my mightes. Now am I now

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cast out of al swetenes of blisse, and mischeuously stongen my passed ioye? Sorowfully must I bewaile, and liue as a wretche. Euery of tho ioyes, is turned into his contrary: for richesse, now haue I powertie, for dignitie now am I enprisoned, in stede of power, wretchednesse I suffre, & for glory of renome I am now dispised, and foulliche hated: thus hath farne fortune, that sodainly am I ouerthrowen, and out of all welth dispoiled. Truely me thinketh this waie in entree is right harde, God graunt me better grace er it be al passed, thother waie lady, me thought right swete. Now certes (q Loue) me list for to chide. What aileth thy darcke dulnesse? Woll it not in clerenesse been sharped. Haue I not by many reasons to thee shewed, soch bodily gooddes failen to yeue blesse, their might so ferforth woll not stretch? Shame (q she it is to saie) thou liest in thy wordes. Thou ne hast wist but right few, that these bodily goodes hadde all atones, commenlie thei dwellen not togither. He that plentie hath in riches, of his kinne is a shamed: another of linage right noble and well know, but powertie him handeleth, he were leuer vnknowe. An other hath these, but renome of peoples praising maie he not haue, ouer all he is hated, & defamed of thinges righte foule. An other is faire and semely, but dignitie him faileth: and he that hath dignite is crowed or lame, or els mishapen, and foully dispised. Thus partable these goodes dwellen, commonly in one housholde been thei but selde. Lo how wretched is your trust, on thing that woll not accord. Me thinketh ỹ clepest thilk plite thou wer in sitines of fortune, and thou saiest for that that selines is departed, thou art a wretch. Then foloweth this vpon thy wordes, euery soule reasonable of mã, maie not die, and if death endeth selines, and maketh wretches, as needes of fortune maketh it an end. Thã soules after death of the body, in wretchednes should liuen. But we knowe many that han getten the blisse of heauen after their death. Howe then maie this life mahẽ men blisfull, that when it passeth, it yeueth no wretchenesse, & many times blisse, if in this life he continue as he should. And wolt thou accompt with fortune, that now at the first she hath doen the tene & sorowe: if thou loke to the maner of all glad things and sorowful, thou maist not naie it, that yet, and namely now thou standest in noble plite in a good ginning, w good forthy going herafter. And if thou wer to be a wretch, for soch welth is passed, why then art thou not well fortunate, for badde thinges & anguis wretchednes been passed? Art thou now come first into the hostrie of this life, or els ỹ both of this world, art thou now a sodain gest into this wretched exile? Wenest there be any thing in this yerth stable? Is not thy first arest passed, that brouzt thee in mortall sorow? Been these not mortall things agon, with ignorance of beastial wit, & hast receiued reason in knowing of vertue? What comforte is in thy harte? The knowing liberly in my seruice be grounded And wost thou not wel as I said, that death maketh ende of all fortune? What then, stãdest thou in noble plite, litle hede or reching to take, if thou let fortune passe ding, or els that she flie when her list, now by thy liue. Parde a mã hath nothyng so lefe as his life and for to holde that he doeth all his cure & diligẽt trauaile. Then saie I thou art blisfull and fortunate sely, if thou knowe thy goodes, that thou hast yet be loued, whiche nothing may doubt, that thei ne been more worthy thã thy life? What is that (q I) good contemplacion (q she) of well doyng in vertue, in time coming, bothe in pleasaunce of me, and of thy Margarite perle: hastly tryn hart in full blisse, wher shalbe eased. Therfore dismay the not, fortune in hate greuously ayenst thy bodilie person, ne yet to great tempest hath she not sent to thee, sithen the holding cables and ankers of thy life, holdẽ by knitting so faste, that thou discomforte the nought of time that is now, ne dispaire thee not of time to come, but yeuen the comfort in hope of well doing, and of getting again the double of thy leling, with encreasing loue of thy Margarit perle therto. For this hiderto ỹ hast had al her full daunger, and so thou might amend al that is misse, & all defautes that somtime thou diddest, and that now in all thy time, to that like margarite in full seruice of my lore, thine hart hath continued, wherfore she ought moche the rather, encline fro her daungerous seat These thinges been yet knit, by the holding anker in thy liue, and holden mote thei: To God I praie al these things at ful been performed. For while this anker holdeth, I hope ỹ shalte safly escape, & while thy true meaning seruice about bryng, in dispite of all false meaners, that thee of newe hateu, for this true seruice, thou art now entered.

CErtes (q I) emong thynges I asked a question, which was the waie to the knot. Truelie ladie how so it be, I tẽpt you with questions & answeres, in speking of my first seruice, I am now in ful purpose in the prick of the hart, ỹ thilk seruice was an enprisonment, & alwaie bad & naughtie, in no maner to be desired. He that in getting of the knot, maie it nothing auaile. A wise gentil hart loketh after vertue, & non other bodily ioies alone. And bicause tofore in this, in tho waies I was set, I wot well my self I haue erred, and of the blisse failed, and so out of my waie hugely haue I ronne. Certes (q she) that is soth, and there thou hast miswente, eschue that pathe from hence forward I rede. Wonder I truelie, why the mortalle folke of this worlde, seche these waies outforthe, and it is priued in your self. Lo how ye been confounded with errour and follie. The knowing of very cause and waie, is goodnes and vertue. Is there any thing to the more precious then thy self? Thou shalt haue in thy power, that thou wouldest neuer lese, & that in no waie maie be taken fro ther, and thilk thing is that is cause of this knotte. And if death mowe it not reue, more thã an yerthly creature, thilke thing then abideth with thy self soule. And so our cõclusion, to make soch a knot thus getten, abideth with this thing, and with the soule, as longe as thei laste. A soule dieth neuer, vertue and goodnes euermore with the soule endureth, and this knot it perfite blisse. Then this soul in this blisse, endlesse shall enduren. Thus shul hartes of a true knot been eased: thus shull their soules been pleased: thus perpetually in ioye shull thei sing. In good trouth (q I) here is a good beginning, yeue vs more of this waie. (q she) I saied to thee not long sithen, that reasonable life was one of three thinges, and it was proued to the soule. Euery soule of reason, hath twoo thinges of sterynge life, one in vertue, and an other in the bodilie worhyng: and whan the soule is the maister ouer the bodie, then is a manne maister of himself: and a man to be a master ouer himself, liueth in vertue and in goodnesse, and as reason of vertue teacheth. So the soule and the body worching vertue togider, liuen reasonable life, whiche clerkes clepen felicitie in liuing, and therein is the hie waie to this knot. These olde Philosophers, that hadden no knowyng of Diuine grace of kindely reason alone, wenden that of pure nature, without any help of grace, me might haue ichoned the other liuinges, reasonablie haue I liued: and for I thinke heraste, if God woll (and I haue space) thilk grace after my leude knowyng declare: I leaue it as at this tyme. But (as I saied) he that out foorthe looketh after the waies of this knotte, comyng with whiche he shold knowe the waie infoorthe, slepeth for the tyme, wherefore he ỹ woll this waie know, muste leaue the lookyng after false waies outfoorthe, and open the iyen of his conscience, and vnclose his hart. Seest not he that hath trust in the bodily life, is so busie bodily woundes, to anoint in kepyng frõ smert (for all out maie thei not be healed) that of woundes in his true vnderstanding, he taketh no hede, the knowing euẽ forth slepeth so harde, but anone as in knowing awake, then ginneth the priuie medicines, for healyng of his true entente, inwardes lightlie healeth conscięce, if it be well hãdled. Then must nedes these waies come out of the soul by sterynge life of the bodie, and els maie no man come to perfite blisse of this knot: and thus by this meane, he shal come to ỹ knot, & to the perfite silinesse that he wende haue had in bodily goodes outforth: Ye (q I) shall he haue bothe knot, riches, power, dignitie, and renome in this maner waie? Ye (q she) that shall I shewe thee. Is he not riche that hath sufficiaunce, and hath the power that no man maie amaistrien? Is not greate dignitie to haue worship and reuerence? And hath he not glory of renome, whose name perpetuall is during, and out of nomber in comparacion? These be the things that mẽ wenen to getten outforthe (q I). Ye (q she) thei that lokẽ after a thing that nought is, thereof in all ne in partie, longe mowe thei gapen after: that is sothe (q I:) therefore (q she) thei that sechen gold in grene trees, and wene to gader precious stones emong vines and laine her nettes in mountaines to fish, and thinken to hunt in depe seas after hart and hind, and seechen in yearth thilke thinges that surmounteth heauen. What maie I of hem saie? But foolishe ignoraunce, misledeth wandring wretches by vncouth wayes, that shullen be forleten, & maketh hem blind fro the right pathe of true waie, that should been vsed. Therefore in generall errour in manhinde, departeth thilke goodes

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by misse seching, which he should haue hole and he sought by reason. Thus goeth he begiled of that he sought, in his hode mē haue blowe a iape. Now (q I) if a man be vertuous, and al in vertue liueth, how hath he al these thinges? That shall I prouen (q she) what power hath any man, to let an other of liuing in vertue? For prisonment or any other disease, he take it pacientlȳ, discomfiteth he not, the tiraunte ouer his soule, no power maie haue: then hath ȳ man so tormented soche power, that he nill be discomfite, ne ouercome maie he not been, sithen pacience in his soule ouercometh, & as not ouercomen. Soche thing that maie not be a maistred, he hath nede to nothyng, for he hath sufficiaunce inow to help himself. And thilke thing that thus hath power and sufficiaunce, and no tiraunte maie it reue, and hath dignitie to set at naught all thynges, here it is a great dignitie that death maie a maistrie. Wherfore thilke power sufficiance so enclosed with dignitie, by all reason renome must haue. Thus is thilk riches with sufficiaunce ye should loke after: this is thilk worshipful dignitie ye shuld coueit: this is ȳ ilke power of might, in which ye shuld trust: this is thilke renome of glory, that endlesse endureth, and al nis but substaunce in vertuous liuing. Certes (q I) all this is sothe, and so I se well that vertue with ful gripe, encloseth al these things. Wherfore in soth I maie saie, by my troth, vertue of my Margarite, brought me first into your seruice, to haue knitting with that iewell, not sodain longinges ne folkes smale wordes, but onely our conuersacion togider: & then I seing thentent of her true meaning, with florishing vertue of pacīēce, that she sted nothing in euill, to quite the wicked leasynges, that false tōges oft in her haue laied. I haue sey it my self, goodly forgeuenesse hath sponge out of her hart, vnitie and accorde aboue al other thinges, she desireth in a good meeke maner, and suffreth many wicked tales.

Ruelie ladie, to you it were a great worship, that sooh thinges by due chastisment were amended. Ye (q she) I haue the excused, all soche thinges as yet mow not be redressed: ti ȳ Margarites vertue, I commende well the more, that pacientlȳ soche anoies suffreth. Dauid king was meke and suffred mohell hate, and many euil speaches: no dispite ne shame, that his enemies him deden, might not moue pacience out of his hart, but euer in one plite mercie he sted. Wherefore God himself toke reward to the thinges, & thereon soche punishment let fal. Truely by reason it ought be ensample of drede, to al maner peoples mirthe. A manne vengeable in wrath, no gouernance in punishmēt ought to haue. Plato had a cause his seruaunte to scourge, and yet cleped he is neighboure, to performe the doing, himself would not, lest wrath had him a maistred, and so might he haue laid on to moche: euermore grounded vertue sheweth the entent fro within. And truly I wot well for her goodnes & vertue, thou hast desired my seruice, to her pleasant well the more, and thy self therto fully hast profered. Good Ladie (q I) is vertue the hie waie to this knot, that long we haue handled? Ye forsoth (q she) and without vertue, goodly this knotte maie not be gotten. Ah now I see (q I) how vertue in me faileth, & I as a sere tree, without burioning or frute alwaie welke, and so I stonde in dispaire of this noble knotte, for vertue in me hath no maner working. A wide where about haue I traueiled. Peace (q she) of thy firste waie thy trauaile is in idell, and as touching the seconde waie, I se well thy meanyng. Thou wouldest cōclude me if thou coudest, bicause I brought thee to seruice, & euery of my seruauntes I helpe to come to this blisse, as I said here before: and thou saidest thy self, thou mightest not be holpē as thou wenest bicause that vertue in the faileth. And this blisse perfitly wout vertue, maie not be gotten, ȳ wenest of these wordes, contradiccion to folowe. Parde at ȳ hardest I haue no seruant, but he be vertuous in dede & thought I brought thee in my seruice, yet art ȳ not my seruaunt: but I saie, thou mist so werch in vertue hereafter, that then shalt thou be my seruaunt, & as for my seruaunt accompted. For habite maketh no Monke, ne wearing of gilt spurres, maketh no knight. Neuer the later, in cōfort of thine hart, yet wol I otherwise answere. Certes ladie (q I tho) so ye muste needes, or els I had nigh caught soche a cordiacle for sorowe, I wot it well I shuld it neuer haue recouered. And therfore now I praie to enforme me in this, or els I hold me without recouerie. I maie not lōg endure, till this lessō be learned, and of this mischief the remedie knowen. Now (q she) be not wrothe, for there is no man on liue,

that

that maie come to a precious thyng, longe coueited, but he somtime suffre tenefull diseases, and wenest thy self to been vnliche to al other? That maie not been: and with the more sorowe that a thynge is getten, the more he hath ioye, the ilke thyng afterwardes to kepe, as it fareth by childrē in schole, that for learnyng arne beaten, when their lesson thei foryetten, commōly after a good disciplinyng with a yerde, thei keepe right well doctrine of their schole.

Right with these woordes, on this Ladie I threwe vp mine iyen, to see her countinaunce and her cheare, and she aperceiuing this fantasie in mine harte, ganne her semblaunte goodlie on me cast, and said in this wise.

It is well knowe, bothe to Reason and Experience in dooyng, euery actiue woorcheth on his passiue, and when thei been togither, actiue and passiue, been icleaped by these Philosophers, if fire bee in place, chafyng thyng able to bee chafed or heate, and the ilke thynges been sette in soche a distaunce, that the one may werche, the other shall suffre. The ilke Margarite thou desirest, is full of vertue, and able to bee actiue in goodnesse: But euery herbe sheweth his vertue, outforthe from within, the Sonne yeueth light, that thinges maie bee seye.

Euery fire heateth the ilke thyng that it neighed, and it be able to be heat, vertue of this Margarite outfoorthe wrethe, and nothynge is more able to suffer woorchyng, or woorke catche of the actife, but passife of thesame actife, and no passife to vertues of this Margarite, but thee in all my donee canne I finde, so that her vertewe muste needes on thee werche, in what place euer thou bee, within distaunce of her worthinesse, as her very passife thou art closed: but vertue maie thee nothyng profite, but thy desire bee performed, and all thy sorowes ceased. Ergo through werchyng of her vertue, thou shalt easelie been holpen, and driuen out of all care, and welcome to this long by thee desired.

Ladie (q I) this is a good lesson, in ginnyng of my ioye: But wete ye well forsoth, though I suppose she haue moche vertue, I would my spousale wer proued, and then maie I liue out of doubte, and reioyce me greatlie, in thinkyng of tho vertues so shewed. I heard thee saie (q she) at my beginning, when I receiued thee first for to serue that thy iewell, thilke Margarite thou desirest, was closed in a muskle, with a blewe shell. Ye forsothe (q I) so I said, and so it is. Well (q she) euery thyng kindelie, sheweth it self, this iewell closed in a blewe shell, excellence of colours, sheweth vertue from within, and so euery wight should rather looke, to the proper vertue of thynges, then to his foraine gooddes. If a thyng bee engendred of good matter, comonlie and for the more parte it followeth, after the congelemente vertue of the first matter, and it be not corrupte with vices, to proceade with encrease of good vertues: Eke right so it fareth of badde. Truely greate excellence in vertue of linage, for the more part discendeth by kind to the successiō in vertues to folowe. Wherfore I saie, the colours of euery Margarite, sheweth from within the finesse in vertue.

Kindely heauen, when merie weather is a lofte, appereth in mannes iye of colour in Blewe, stedfastnesse in peace, betokenyng within and without: Margarite is engendred by heauenlie Dewe, and sheweth in it self, by finenesse of colour, whether the engendrure, wer maked on morowe or on eue: thus saieth kinde of this peerle. This precious Margarite that thou seruest, sheweth it self discēded by nobley of vertue, from his heauenliche dewe, nourished and congeled in mekenesse, that mother is of all vertues, and by werkes that men, seen withouten the significacion of the coloures, been shewed mercie and pitie in the hart, with peace to al other, and al this is iclosed in a Muskle, who so readilie these vertues loken. All thyng that hath soule, is reduced into good by meane thynges, as thus: Into GOD manne is reduced by soules reasonable, and so foorthe beastes, or bodies that mowe not mouen, after place been reduced into man, by beastes meue that mouen from place to place: so that thilke bodies that han felyng soules, and moue not frō places, holden the lowest degree of solyng thynges in felyng, and soche been reduced into man by meanes. So it foloweth, the muskle as mother of all vertues, halte the place of mekenesse, to his lowest degree discendeth doune of heuen, and there by a maner of virgin engendrure, arne these Margarites engendred, & afterward cōgeled. Made not mekenesse so lowe the hie heauen, to enclose & catchout

thereof

thereof so noble a dewe, that after congelement a Margarite, with endles vertue and euerlasting ioy, was with ful vessel of grace yeuen to euery creature, that goodly would it receiue. Certes (qꝑ I) these thinges been right noble, I haue er this herde these same sawes. Then (qꝑ she) thou woste well these thynges been sothe: Ye forsothe (qꝑ I) at the full. Now (qꝑ she) that this Margarite is ful of vertue, it is well proued, wherefore some grace, some mercie emong other vertues, I wotte right well on thee shall discende: ye (qꝑ I) yet would I haue better declared vertues in this Margarite, kindelie to been grounded. That shall I shewe thee (qꝑ she) and thou wouldest it learne: Learne (qꝑ I) what neadeth soche woordes: wete ye not well Ladie your self, that all my cure, all my diligence, and all my might, haue tourned by your counsaile, in pleasance of that perle, al my thought and all my study, with your helpe desireth, in worshippe the ilke iewell, to encrease al my trauaill, and all my businesse in your seruice, this Margarite to glad in somehalue: me were leuer her honour, her pleasaunce, and her good cheare, thorowe me for to be maintained and kept, and I of soche thynge in her likyng to bee cause, then all the wealthe of bodily goodes ye could reckon. And would neuer God, but I put my self in greate ieopardie of al that I would, that is now no more but my life alone, rather then I should suffer thilke iewel in any poincte been blemished, as ferre as I maie suffre, and with my mightes stretche. Soche thing (qꝑ she) maie mokel further thy grace, and thee in my seruice auaunce. But now (qꝑ Loue) wilt thou graunte me thilke Margarite to been good: O good good (qꝑ I) why kept ye me and tene with soche maner speache: I would graunte that, though I should anone die, and by my trouth fight in the quarell, if any wighte would counterpleade. It is so moche the lighter (qꝑ Loue) to proue our entent. Ye (qꝑ I) but yet would I heare, how ye would proue, that she were good by reasonable skill, that it nowe not been denied, for although I knowe, and so doeth many other, manyfolde goodnes and vertue, in this Margarite been printed, yet some menne there been, that no goodnesse speaken: and where euer your wordes been heard, and your reasons been shewed, soche euill speakers Ladie, by authoritie of your excellence, shullen been stopped and ashamed. And more thei that hã none acquaintaunce in her persone, yet mowe thei know her vertues, and been the more enformed in what wise thei mowe set their hartes, whẽ hem lift into your seruice any entree make: for truely all this to begin, I wote well my self, that thilke iewell is so precious perle, as a womanly woman in her kinde, in whõ of goodnesse, of vertue, and also of aunswering, shappe of limmes, and fetures so well in all poinctes accordyng, nothing faileth: I leue that kinde her made with greate studie, for kinde in her persone nothyng hath forget, and that is well seen. In euery good wightes harte, she hath grace of commendyng, and of vertuous praisyng. Alas that euer kinde made her deadlie, saue onelie in that I wote well, that Nature in formyng of her in nothyng hath erred.

Certes (quod Loue) thou haste well begonne, and I aske thee this question: Is not in generalle euery thyng good? I not (quod I). No (quod she) saue not GOD euerie thing that he made, and werne righte good. Then is wonder (qꝑ I) howe euill thynges commen a place, sithen that all thinges weren right good. Thus (qꝑ she) I woll declare eueriche qualitie, and euery accion, and euery thing that hath any maner of beyng, it is of God, and GOD it made, of whom is all goodnesse, and all beyng, of hym is no badnesse: badde to bee is naught: Good to be is somewhat, and therfore good and beeyng, is one in vnderstanding. How maie this bee (qꝑ I) for often han shrewes me assailed, and mokell badnesse therein haue I founden, and so me semeth bad, to bee somewhat in kinde. Thou shalt (qꝑ she) vnderstande that soche maner badnesse, which is bled to purifie wrong doers is somewhat, and God it made, and beeyng hath, and that is good: other badnes no beyng hath vtterlie, it is in the negatiue of somewhat, and that is naughte, and nothinge beyng. The parties essenciall of beyng, arne saied in double wise, as that it is, and these parties been found in euery creature, for all thing a this halfe the firste beyng, is beyng through participaciõ, taking partie of being, so that euery creature is difference, betwen beyng, and of him through

whom

whom it is and his owne beyng: right as euery good is a maner of beyng, so is it good through beyng, for it is naught other to be: and euery thing though it be good, it is not of hymself good, but it is good by that, it is ordinable to the greate goodnes. This dualitie after Clerkes determillion, is founden in euery creature, bee it neuer so single of onhed. Yet (q I) but there as it is saied, that God saue euery thyng of his makyng, and were right good, as your self said to me, not long tyme sithē. I aske whether euery creature is saied good, through goodnesse vnformed, either els formed, and afterwarde if it bee accepte vtterly good: I shall saie thee (q she) these greate passed clerkes, han deuided good, in to good being alone, & ỹ is nothing but good, for nothyng is good in that wise, but God. Also in good by participaciō, and that is icleaped good, for farre fette, and representatiue of goodlie goodnesse, and after this manifolde good is said, that is to saie, good in kinde, and good in gendre, and good of grace, and good of ioye.

Of good in kind Augustine saith, al that been, been good: but peraunter thou wouldest wete, whether of hemself it bee good, or els of an others goodnes, for naturell goodnesse of euery substaunce, is nothing els thā his substaunciall beyng, whiche is icleaped goodnesse, after comparison that he hath to his first goodnesse, so as it is inductatife, by meanes into the firste goodnesse. Boece sheweth this thing at the full, that this name good, is in generall name in kinde, as it is comparisoned generally to his principalle ende, whiche is God, knotte of all goodnes. Euery creature crieth God vs made, and so thei han full apeted to thilke God by affeccion, soche as to hem belongeth: and in this wise all thynges been good, of the greate GOD, whiche is good alone. This wonder thing (q I) how ye haue by many reasons proued, my first waie to bee errour and misgoyng, and cause of badnesse and feble meanyng, in the ground ye aledged to be rooted: whence is it, that soche badnesse hath springes, sithen all thinges thus in generall ben good, & badnesse hath no beyng, as ye haue declared: I wene if all thynges been good, I might then with the firste waie, in that good haue ended, and so by goodnesse haue comen to blisse in your seruice desired. All thing (q she) is good by beyng in participacion, out of the first goodnesse, which goodnesse is corrupte by badnesse, and bad meanyng maners: God hath in good thynges, that thei been good by beyng, & not in euel, for there is absence of rightfull loue, for badnesse is nothing only but euil wil of the doer, and through giltes of the doer, wherefore at the ginning of ỹ worlde, euery thing by himself was good, and in vniuersall thei werne right good. An ye or a hande is fairer, and better in a bodie sette in his kindlie place, then from the bodie diseuered. Euery thing in his kindlie place beyng kindlie, good doth werche, and out of that place boided, it dissolueth and is defouled hym selue. Our noble GOD in gliterande wise by armonie this worlde ordeined, as in purtreitures, storied with colours medled, in whiche blacke, and other darcke colours, commenden the golden & the Assured painture, euery put in kindely place, one beside an other, more for other glitereth: right so little faire, maketh rizt faire more glorious, and right so of goodnes, and of other thynges in vertue. wherefore other bad, and not so good perles as this Margarite, that we hā of this matter, yeuen by the aire little goodnesse, and little vertue, righte mokell goodnesse, and vertue in thy Margarite to been proued, in shining wise to be foūd & shewed. How shuld euer goodnes of peace haue ben knowe, but if vnpeace somtime reigne, and mokell euill wrothe? Howe should mercie been proued, and no trespasse were, by due iustificaciō to be punished? Therefore grace and goodnesse of a wighte is founde, the sorowful hartes in good meaning to endure, been comforted, knite, and accorde betwene hartes knitte in ioye to abide.

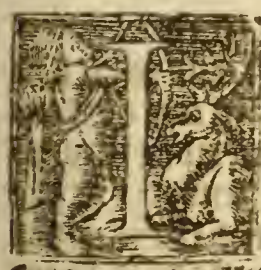
What wenest thou that I reioce, or els accoumpte hym emong my seruauntes, that pleaseth Pallas, in vndoyng of Mercurie, all be it that to Pallas he be knitte by title of Lawe, not accordyng to the reasonable conscience: and Mercurie in dooyng, haue grace to been suffered: or els hym that weneth the Moone, for faireneſſe of the eue Sterre. Lo, otherwhile by nightes light of the Moone, greatlie comforteth in darche thoughtes and blinde. Understandyng of loue, yeueth greate gladnesse: who so lisse no bileue, whē a soth tale is shewed, adewe and a deblis his name is entred. Wise folke and worthie in gentillesse, bothe of vertue and of liuyng, yeuen full credence in sothenes of loue with a good hart, there as good

euidence

euidence or experience in doinge, shewethe not ỹ contrarie. Thus mightest thou haue ful preue in thy Margarites goodnesse, by cõmendement of other ie wels badnesse, and puelnesse in doinge. Stoundemele diseases yeueth seuerall houres in ioye.

Nowe by my trouthe (q I) this is wel declared, that my Margarite is good, for sythen other been good, and she passeth many other in goodnes and vertue, wherby ough by maner necessarye she muste be good: and goodnesse of this Margarite is nothinge elles but vertue, wherfore she is vertuous; and if there failed anye vertue in anye side, there were lacke of vertue: badde nothinge els is ne maye bee: but lacke and wante of good and goodnesse, and so shoulde she haue that same lache, that is to sayne badde; and that maye not be, for she is good, and that is good me thinketh all good: and so by consequence me semeth vertuous, and no lacke of vertue to haue. But the Sonne is not know but he shine, ne vertuous herbes but they haue her kinde werchinge, ne vertue but it stretche in goodnesse or profite to another, is no vertue. Than by al waies of reason, sithen mercie and pite ben moste commended amonge other vertues, and they might neuer been shewed refreshemẽt of helpe, and of comforte, but nowe at my moste nede, and that is the kinde werkinge of these vertues: trewly I wene I shall not varie from these helpes.

Fyre and if he yeue none heate, for fire is not demed. The Sonne but he shine, for sonne is not accounted. Water but it wete, the name shal ben chaunged. Vertue but it werche, of goodnes dothe it faile, sin to his cõtrarie the name shal bereuersed, and these ben impossible: wherfore the contradictory that is necessarie, nedes must I leue. Certes (q she) in thy person and out of thy mouth these wordes lien well to been said, and in thine vnderstandinge to be leued, as in entent of this Margarite alone: and here now my spech inconclusiõ of these wordes.



N these thynges (q she) that me list nowe to shewe openly, shal be founde the matter of thy sickenesse, & what shal been the medicin that maye be thy sorowes lisse and comfort, as well thee as all other that amisse haue erred, and out of the waye walked, so that any drop of good will in amendement ben dwelled in their hertes. Prouerbes of Salomon openly teacheth, howe somtime an innocent walkid by the waye in blindenesse of a derke night, whome mette a woman (if it be lefely to saye) as a strumpete arated, redily purueied in turning of thoughtes with veine ianglinges, and of resle impacient dissimulacion of my termes, saiyng in this wise: come and be we dronke of our swete pappes, vse we coueitous collinges. And thus drawen was this innocente, as an ore to the larder, Lady (q I) to me this is a queinte thinge to vnderstande: I praye you of this parable declare me the entente. This innocente (q she) is a scholer lerninge of my loze, in seching of my blisse, in which thinge the daye of his thought turninge enclineth in to eue, and the sonne of verye light fatlinge, maketh darke night in his conninge. Thus in derkenesse of manye doutes he walketh, and for blindenesse of vnderstanding, he ne wote in what waye he is in: forsothe soche one may lightly ben begiled. To whome came loue fained, not clothed of my liuery, but vnlefull lustie habite, with softe speche and mery, and with faire honied wordes heretikes and misse meuing people, children and wimplen their errours. Austen witnesseth of an heretike that in his firste beginninge, he was a man right experte in reasons, and swete in his wordes and the werkes miscordẽ. Thus fareth fayned loue in her first werchinges: thou knowest these thinges for trewe, thou hast hem proued by experience. Somtime in doinge to thin owne person, in whiche thing thou hast founde matter of mokel disease. Was not fained loue redily purueied, thy wittes to cath & tourne thy good thoughtes: trewly she hath wounded the conscience of manye, with florishinge of mokell ianglinge wordes: and good worthe thanked I it for no glose, I am gladde of my prudence thou hast so manly her veined. To me arte thou moche holden, that in thy kinde course of good meaninge I returne thy minde: I trowe ne had I shewed the thy Margarite, thou haddest neuer returned. Of firste in good perfite ioye was euer fayned loue impacient, as the water of Syloe, which euermore floweth with stilnesse and priui noise tyl it come nyghe the brinke, and than ginneth it so out of measure to bolne, with nouelleries of chaungynge stones, that in

course of every renninge, it is in pointe to spil al his circuit of canles. Thus fained loue priuely at the fullest of his flowinge, newe stormes debate to areise. And al be it that Mercurius often with hole vnderstãding, knowen soche perillous matters, yet Venerius so lustie ben and so leude in their wyttes, that in soche thinges right litel or naught don they sele, and writen and dryen to their felowes: here is blisse, here is ioye, and thus in to one same errour, mokel folke they drawen. Come they saine, and be we dronken of our pappes, that ben fallas and lying glose of whiche nowe they not soube mylke of helthe, but deedly venym and poison, corrupcion of sorowe. Mylke of fallas, is venym of disceite: Mylke of lynge glose is venym of corrupciõ. Lo what thinge cometh out of these pappes: vse we coueited collinges, desire we and meddle we false wordes with sote, and sote with false, truely this is the sorinesse of fained loue, nedes of these surfettes, sikenesse must folow.

Thus as an ore to thy langorying deth wer thou drawen, the sote of the smoke hath the al defased. Euer the deper thou somtime wadest, the soner thou it founde: yf it had thee killed it had be litell wonder. But on that other side my trewe seruaunt not faynen ne disceiue conne, sothly their doing is open, my foundemẽt endureth, be the burthen neuer so greate, euer in one it lasteth: it geueth lyfe and blisfull goodnesse in the last endes, though the ginniges ben sharpe. Thus of two contraries, contrarie ben the effectes. And so thilke Margarite thou seruest, shal sene the by her seruice, out of perillous tribulacion delyuered, bycause of her seruice in to newe disease fallen, by hope of amendemente in the laste ende, with ioye to be gladded. wherfore of kinde pure, her mercy with grace of good helpe, shall she graunt, and elles I shal her so straine, that with pite shall she ben amaistred. Remembre in thine herte howe horrible somtyme to thine Margarite thou trespasest, and in a great wise ayenst her thou forfeitest: clepe ayen thy minde, and knowe thine owne gyltes. What goodnes, what bountie, with inobell folowing pyte founde thou in that tyme? where thou not goodly accepted in to grace? By my pluckynge was she to forgeuenesse enclined. And after I her stired to draw the to house, and yet wendest thou vtterlie for euer haue ben refused. But wel thou wost, sithen that I in soche sharpe disease might so greatelye auayle, what thinkest in thy wyt? Howe ferre maye my witte stretch? And thou lack not on thy side I wol make the knotte: Certes in thy good bering I woll accorde with the plaunter. I haue founde Dauid in my seruice true, and with holy oyle of peace and of rest longe by him desired, vtterly he shal be anoynted. Truste wel to me, and I wol thee not faile. The leming of the first way wyth good hert of continuaunce, that I se in the grounded, this purpose to parfourme, draweth my by maner of constrayninge, that nedes must I ben thine helper: athough mirthe a whyle be taryed, it shal come at soche season, that thy thought shall been ioyed, and wolde neuer God, sithen thyne herte to my reasones arne assented, and openly haste confessed thyne amisse goynge, and nowe criest after mercy but yf mercy folowed: thy blisse shall ben redy ywis, thou ne wost how sone.

Nowe be a good chylde I rede. The kind of vertues in thy Margaryte rehersed, by strength of me in thy persone shul werche. Comfort the in thys, for thou mayst not miscarie. And these wordes said, she streight her on length and rested a while.

Thus endeth the seconde booke, and here after followeth the thide booke.

Of nombre saine these clerkes that it is naturel some of discret thinges, as in tellinge one two, thre, and so forth: but among all nombres thre is determined for moste certain. Wherfore in nombre certaine this werke of my besye leudenesse, I thynke to ende and parfourme.

Ensample by this worlde in thre tymes is deuided: Of whiche the firste is cleped Demacian, that is to say, going out of trewaye, and all that tho dieden, in hell were thy punished for a mannes sinne, tyl grace and mercy fette hem thẽce, and there ended the first time. The second time lasteth from the comming of merciable grace, vntyl the ende

ende of tralitorie time, in which is shewed the true way in forsdoinge of the badde, and that is ycleped tyme of grace: & that thinge is not yeuen by deserte of yeldinge, one benefite for another, but onely through goodnesse of the yeuer of grace in thilke tyme. Who so can wel vnderstand, is shapen to be saued in souled blysse. The thirde tyme shal gine whan translitorie thinges of worldes han made their ende, and that shal been in ioy, glory, and red both body and soule, that wel han deserued in the time of grace. And thus in that heuen togither shul they dwel perpetuelli, without any ymaginatife yuel in any halue. These times are figured by tho thre dayes, that our God was closed in yerthe, and in the thirde arose, shewinge our resurrectiõ, to ioy and blisse of tho that it deseruen, by his merciable grace. So this leude booke in thre matters accordaunt to tho tymes, lightely by a good inseer maye been vnderstande, as in the firste erroure of misse going is shewed with sorowful pine, punished is cried after mercie. In the seconde is grace in good waye proued, which is failing without deserte, thilke first misse amending in correction of tho errours and euen waye to bringe with comforte of welfare, in to amendemente weringe. And in the thirde ioye and blisse, graunted to him that wel canne deserue it, and hath sauour of vnderstanding in the tyme of grace.

Thus in ioye of my thirde booke shall the matter be till it ende. But speciall cause I haue in my herte to make this processe of a Margarit perle, that is so precious a gẽme with clere and litell of whiche stones or iewel, the tonges of vs English people tourneth the right names, & clepeth hem Margeryte perles: thus varieth our spech from many other langages. For trewely Latin, Frenche, & manye mo other langages cleapeth hem Margery perles, the name Margarite or Margrit peerles: wherfore in that denominacion I woll me accorde to other mens tonges, in that name cleping. These clerkes that treaten of kindes, & studien out the propertie ther of thinges, saine ỳ Margarit is a lytel white perle, throughout holow and rounde, & vertuous, and on the see sides in the more Britain in muskle shelles of the heuenly dewe the best ben engẽdred: in which by experiẽce ben founde thre faire vertues. One is it, yeueth comforte to the felynge spirites in bodily persones of reason. Another is good, it is profitable helth ayenst passions of sorie mens hertes. And the thirde it is nedefull and noble in staunchinge of bloode, there elles to mochy wolde out ren. To which perle and vertues me list to liken at this tyme Philosop, bye with her thre speces, that is naturell and moral, and resonable: of which thinges hereth what sain these great clerkes. Philosophie is knowinge of deuinly and manly thinges ioyned with studie of good liuing, and this stante in two thinges, that is conninge and opinion: conninge is whan a thing by certaine reason is conceiued. But wretches, and fooles and leude men, many wil conceiue a thing and maintain it as for a sothe, though reason be in the contrarie, wherfore conninge is a straunger. Opiniõ is while a thing is in non certaine, & hidde frome mens very knowleginge, and by no parfite reason fully declared, as thus: if the sõne be so mokel as men wenen, or elsit it be more than the erthe. For in sothnes the certaine quantite of ỳ planet is vnknowen to erthly dwellers, and yet by opinion of some menne it is holden for more thã midde erth. The firste spece of Philosophye is naturel, which in kindely thingnes treaten, and sheweth causes of heuen, and strength of kindely course: as by arsmetrike, geometry, musike, and by astronomye, techeth waies and course of heuens, of planetes and of sterres aboute heuen and erthe, and other elementes. The seconde spece is morall, whiche in order of liuing maners techeth, and by resõ proueth vertues of soule moste worthy in our liuing, whiche been Prudence, Justice, Temperaunce, and strength. Prudence is goodly wisedome in knowinge of thinges. Strength voydeth al aduersitees aliche euen. Temperaunce distroieth bestiall lyuing with ealie bearing. And Justice right fully iudgeth, and iudginge departeth to euery wight that that is his owne. The thirde spece tourneth in to reason of vnderstanding, al thinges to be said soth and discussed, & that in two thinges is deuided: one is art, another is rhetorique, in which two al lawes of mans reason been grounded or els maintained. And for this booke is all of loue, and therafter beareth his name, & Philosophie & law must here to accordẽ by their clergial discriptions: as Philosophie for loue of wisedome is declared: Lawe for maintainaunce of peace is holde, and these

with loue muste nedes acorden, therfore of hem in this place haue I touched. Orde of homly thinges and honest maner of liuing in vertue, with rightfull iudgemēt in causes, and profitable administracion in comunalties of realmes and cities, by euenhede profitably to raine, nat by singuler auauntage, ne by priuy enuy, ne by solein purpose in couetise of worship or of goodes, ben disposed in open rule shewed, by loue, Philosophie, and law, and yet loue tofore al other. Wherfore as susterne in vnite they acorden and one ende that is peace & rest, they cause norisshinge, and in the ioye mainteinen to endure. Nowe than, as I haue declared: my boke acordeth with discripcio of thre thinges, & the Margarit in vertue is likened to Philosophie, w the three speces. In whiche matters euer twei bē acordaūt with bodily reson, and the thirde with the soule: But in conclusion of my booke & of this Margarit peerle, in knitting togider law by thre sondry maners shalbe lykened, that is to saye, lawe, right, & custome, which I wol declare al that is law, cometh of goods ordinaunce by kindely worching, & thilke thinges ordained by mās wittes arne icleped right, whiche is ordayned by many maners & in constitution writen: But custome is a thinge that is accepted for right or for law, ther as lawe and right failen, & ther is no differēce, whether it come of scripture or of reason. Wherfore it sheweth that law is kindly gouernaunce: right cometh out of mānes probable reason: and custome is of comē vsage by length of time vsed, & custome nat write is vsage, and if it bee writte constitution it is ywriten & ycleped: But lawe of kinde is comen to euery nation, as coniunction of man and woman in loue, succession of children in heritance, restituicion of thinge by strength taken or lent, and this lawe amōg al other halte the souerainest gree in worship, whiche lawe began at the beginning of reasonable creature, it varyed yet neuer for no chaunging of time, cause for sothe in ordaining of lawe, was to constraine mens hardinesse in to peace, and withdrawinge his yuel wil, and turning malice in to goodnesse, and þ innocence likerly withoutē teneful anoy amonge shrewes, safely might inhabyte by protercion of safe conducte, so that shrewes harme for harme by bridele of ferdenesse shulden restraine. But forsothe in kindly law nothinge is commended, but soche as goddes wil hath confirmed, ne nothinge denied but contrary oustie of goddes will in heauen: ete than all lawes or custome, or els constitution by vsage, or writing, that contrarien law of kinde, vtterly ben repugnaūt and aduersary to our godds wil of heuen. Trewly law of kind for goddes own lusty will is verily to maintaine, vnder whiche lawe (and vnworthy) bothe profesle & reguler arn obediēcer an boundē to this Margarit perle, & by knotte of loues statutes and stablishement in kinde, which that goodly maye not been withsetten. Lo vnder this bonde am I constrained to abyde and man vnder lyuinge lawe ruled, by that lawe oweth after desertes to ben rewarded by pain or by mede, but if mercie weyue the paine: for than be parte, reasonfulli maye be sey, þ mercy both right and lawe passeth. thentent of al these matters, is the left clere vnderstanding, to weten at thende of this thirde booke ful knowinge thorow goddes grace, I thinke to mak neuerthelater, yet if these thinges hā a good and a sleght inseer whiche that canne souke hony of the hard stone, oyle of the drie rocke, may lyghty sele nobley of matter in my leude ymaginacion closed.

But for my booke shall be of ioye (as I said) and I so ferre set fro thylke place, fro whens gladnes should come, my corde is to short to let my boket ought catche of that water, and fewe menne bee abouten my corde to eche, and many in ful purpose ben redy it shorter to make, and to enclose thenter, that my boket of ioye nothinge shulde catch, but empty returne, my carefull sorowes to encrease, & if I die for pain, that wer gladnes at their hertes. Good lord send me water in to the cop of these mountaines, & I shall drinke therof my thrustes to stanch: & sey these be cōfortable welles in to helth of goodnes of my sauiour am I holpē. And yet I say more, the house of ioy to me is not opened. How dare my sorowful goost than in any mater of gladnesse thynken to trete: for euer sobbynges and complaintes be redy refrete in his meditacions, as werbles in many folde stoundes comming about I not than. And therfore what maner of ioy coude endite, but yet at dore shal I knocke, if the key of Dauid wolde the locke vnshyt and he bring me in, whiche that childrens tonges bothe openeth and closeth. whose spirite, where he wel worcheth, departinge

goodly

goodly as him lyketh. Now to goddes laude & reuerence, profite of the reders, amendement of maners of the herers, encreling of worship among loues seruauntes, releuing of my herte in to grace of my iewel, & frenship plesaunce of this perle. I am stered in this making, & for nothing els: and yf any good thing to mennes liking in this scripture be foūde, thanketh the maister of grace which that of ȳ good & al other is authour, & principal doer. And if any thing be insufficiēt or els myslyking, with ȳ that the leudnesse of myne vnable cōning, for body in disease anoyeth the vnderstāding in soule. A diseselv habytatiō leteth the wittes many thinges, & namely in sorow. The custome neuer the later of loue, be longe time of seruice in termes I thinke to pursue, whiche ben liuely to yeue vnderstandinge in other thynges. But nowe to enforme the of this Margarites goodnes, I may her not halfe praise. Wherfore not she for my booke, but this booke for her is worthy to be commēded, tho my booke be leude: right as thinges nat for places, but places for thinges ought to be desired and praised.

Ow (q loue) trewely thy wordes I haue well vnderstōde. Certes me thinketh hym ryght good, & me wondreth why ȳ so lightli passeth in the law. Sothlye (q I) my wyt is leude & I am right blind and that mater depe, how shuld I thā haue waded, lightly might I haue drenched and spilt ther my self. Yea (q she) I shal helpe the to swime. For right as lawe punisheth brekers of preceptes, & the cōtrary doers of the writen constitutiōs: right so ayēward, law rewardeth & yeueth mede to hem that law strenghten. By one law this rebel is punished, & this innocent is mede, ȳ shrewe is emprisoned & this rightfull is corowned. The same lawe ȳ ioyneth by wedloke wythout forsaking, ȳ same law yeueth libel of departiciō bycause of deuorse, both demed & declared. Ye ye (q I) I finde in no lawe to mede & rewarde in goodnes, the giltie of desertes. Fole (q she) giltie cōuerted in your law, mykel merite deserueth. Also Pauly of Rome was corowned, that by hym the maiteiners of Pōpeus weren knowen & distroied: and yet tofore was this Paulin chefe of Pōpeus counsaile. This lawe in Rome hath yet his name of meluring in mede, the bewraiyng of the cōspiracy, ordained by tho senatours the death. Julius Cesar is acōpted in to Cotōs rightwisnesse, for euer in trouthe florisheth his name amōge the knowers of reason. Perdicas was corowned in ȳ heritage of Alexāder ȳ great, for telling of a priuy hate ȳ king Porrus to Alexander hadde. Wherfore euery wight by reason of law after his righwisenes apertly his mede maye chalenge: & so thou that maintainest law of kinde, & therfore disease hast suffred in the law, reward is worthy to be rewarded & ordained, and apertly thy mede might ȳ chalenge. Certes (q I) this haue I well lerned, and euer hēforward I shal draw me therafter in one hed of will to abide this lawe both maintain & kepe, and so hope I best entre in to your grace, wel deseruing in o worship of a wight, without nedeful cōpulsion ought medefully to be rewarded. Truly (q Loue) that is soth, & tho by cōstitucion good seruice in to profite & auauntage stretch, vterly many mē it demē to haue more desert of mede, thā good wil nat cōpelled. Se now (q I) how may men holden of this the cōtrary. And what is good seruice? Of you wolde I here this question declared. I shal say the (q she) in a few wordes, resonable workinges in plesaunce & profite of thy soueraine. How shuld I this performe (q I) right well (q she) & here me nowe a lytell. It is hardely (q she to vnderstande) that right as mater by due ouerchaūginges soloweth his perfection & his forme: right so euery mā by rizt-full werkīges ought to folow ȳ leful desires in his hert, & se tofore to what ende he deserueth, for many times he that loketh nat after theudes, but vttery therof is vnknowen, befalleth oftē many yuels to dō, wherthrough er he be ware shālulli he is cōfounded, thend therof neden to be befor loked to euery desire of soch forsight in good seruice thre thīges specially nedeth to be rulers in his worhes. First ȳ he do good, next that he do by election in his owne hert, & the thirde that he do godly withouten any surquedry in thoughtes. That your werkes shulden be good in seruice, or in any other actes, authorites many may be aleged, neuer the latter, by resō thus may it be shewed. Al your worhes be cleped secōd & mouē in vertue of ȳ first wercher, which in good worhs wrought you to procede, & right so your werkes mouen in to vertue of the last ende, & right

in the firſt worching wer nat, no man ſhuld in the ſecõd werche. Right ſo but ye feled to what ende, and ſen their goodnes cloſed, ye ſhulde no more retch what ye wrought but the ginning gan with good, and there ſhal it ceaſe in the laſt ende, if it be wel cõſidred. Wherfore the mydle, if other wayes it drawe than acordaũt, to thendes, there ſtinketh the courſe of good, & another maner courſe entreth, & ſo it is a party by him ſelue, & euery part be nat accordant to his al, is foule and ought to be eſchewe, wherfore euery thing that is wrought & be nat good, is nat accordãt to thendes of his al hole, it is foule, and ought to be wdraw. Thus the perſons that neither don good ne harme, ſhamen foule their making: Wherfore without working of good actes in good ſeruice, may no mã been accepted. Trewly the like ỹ han might to do good, & done it not, ỹ crowne of worſhyp ſhal be take frõ hem, & with ſhame ſhul they be anulled. And ſo to make one werke accordaunt with his endes, euerye good ſeruaunt by reaſon of conſequẽce muſt do good nedes Certes it ſuffiſeth not alone to do good, but goodly withal folow, the thãke of goodnes els in nought he deſerueth: For right as al your being, come from the greateſt good, in whõ al goodnes is cloſed. Right ſo your endes ben directe to the ſame good. Ariſtotell determineth ỹ ende & good ben one, & cõuertible in vnderſtãding, & he that in wil doth away good, and he that loketh not to thend loketh not to good, but he that doth good & doth not goodlye, drawe thy dyrection of thende not goodly, muſt nedes bee bad. Lo badde is nothing els, but abſcẽce or negatiue of good, as derkenes is abſence or negatiue of light. Thã he that doth goodly directeth thilke good into thende of badde. So muſt thing not good folow, eke badnes to ſoch folk ofte foloweth. Thy contrariaũt workers of thende that is good, ben worthy that contrary of thẽde that is good to haue How (q I) may any good dede be done, but if goodly it helpe. Yes (q Loue) ỹ deuill doth many good dedes, but goodly he leueth behinde, for euẽ badly & in in deſeruable wiſe he worketh. Wherfore the cõtrary of thend hi folowe th. And do he neuer ſo many good dedes, bicauſe goodly is away, his goodnes is not rekened. Lo than tho a man do good, but he do good, but he do goodlye thende in goodneſſe wol not folowe, and thus in good ſeruice both good dede and goodly don muſten ioyne togider, and that it be done with free choiſe in hert: & els deſerueth he nat the merite in goodes, that woll I proue. For if ỹ do any thing good by chaũce or by happe in what thing art thou therof worthy to be commended: for nothing by reaſon of that, turneth in to thy praiſinge ne lacking. Lo thilke thinge done by hap by thy wil is nat cauſed, & therby ſhulde I thanke or lake deſerue: & ſithen ỹ fayleth, thende whiche that wel ſhuld reward, muſt nedes faile. Clerkes ſaine, no man but willing is bleſſed, a good dede that he hath done is not done of free choiſe willing, without whiche bliſſednes may nat folow. Ergo nether thãke of goodneſſe ne ſeruice in that is cõtrary of the good ende, ſo thã to good ſeruice lõgeth good dede goodly don, thorow fre choiſe in hert. Truely (q I) this haue I wel vnderſtand. Wel (q ſhe) euery thig thus done ſufficiẽtly by law that is cleped iuſtice, after reward claime. For law & iuſtice was ordained in this wiſe ſoche deſertes in goodnes after quantite in doinge, by mede to rewarde, & of neceſſite of ſoch iuſtice, that is to ſay, rightwiſenes was fre choiſe in deſeruing of wel or of yuel grauted to reſonable creatures. Euery mã hath free arbitremẽt to chooſe good or yuel to performe. Nowe (q I) tho if I by my good wil deſerue this margarit perle, & am therto cõpelled, & haue free choiſe to do what me liketh: She is thã holdẽ as me thinketh to reward thentẽt of my good will. Goddes forbode elſ (q Loue) no wight meaneth other wiſe I trow, fre wil of good hert after mede deſerueth. Hath euery mã (q I) fre choiſe by neceſſary maner of wil in euery of his doinges, ỹ him liketh by godſproper purueiaũce I wolde ſe that well declared to my leude vnderſtãding, for neceſſary & neceſſite been wordes of mokel intẽcion, cloſig (as to ſay) ſo mote it be nedes, & otherwiſe maye it nat betide. This ſhalt thou lerne (q ſhe) ſo thou take hede in my ſpech. If it wer nat in mãnes own liberte of fre wil to do good or bad but to the one teied by bonde of goodes preordinaũce: Than do he neuer ſo wel it were by nedeful compulcion of thilke bonde and nat by fre choiſe, wherby nothing he deſireth, & do he neuer ſo yuel it wer nat mã for to wite, but onelich to him that ſoch thing ordained hem to don. Wherfore he ne ought for bad be puniſhe, ne for no good deede be rewarded, but of neceſſite of rightwiſnes was

therfore

therefore free choice of arbitrement, put in mannes proper disposicion: truly if it were otherwise, it contraried gods charitie, that badnes & goodnes, rewardeth after deserte of pain, or of mede. Me thinketh this wonder. (q I) for god by necessitie forwote al things coming, and so mote it nedes be: & thilk things that been doen, be our free choice comen nothing of necessitie, but onely by wil: how maie this stande togider: & so me thinketh truly, that free choice fully repugneth Goddes forweting. Truly ladie, me semeth thei mowe not stande togither.

Then gan loue nigh me nere, and with a noble countenaūce of visage and limmes, dressed her nighe my sittyng place. Take forthe (q she) thy penne, and redily write these woordes, for if God woll, I shall hem so enforme to thee, that thy leudenesse, whiche I haue understand in that matter, shall openly be clered, and thy sight in full loking therin amended. First, if thou thinke that Goddes prescięce, repugne libertie of arbetrie of arbitrement, it is impossible that thei should accord in onhed of sothe to understandyng. Ye (q I) forsoth so I it conceiue. Well (q she) if thilke impossible were awaie, the repugnaunce that semeth to be therein, wer vterly removed. Shew me thabsence of that impossibilitie (q I). So (q she I shall). Now I suppose that thei mowe stande togither, prescięce of God, whō foloweth necessitie of things coming, and libertie of arbitremēt, through whiche thou beleuest many thynges, to bee without necessitie. Bothe these propocions be sothe (q I) and well mowe stande togider, wherefore this case as possible I admit. Truely (q she) and this case is impossible. How so (q I). For hereof (q she) foloweth and wereth an other impossible. Proue me that (q I). That I shall (q she) for some thing is comyng without necessitie, and God wote that tofore, for all thing comyng he before wot, & that he before wot of necessitie is coming: as he before wot, be the case by necessary maner then, or els thorowe necessitie, is somthing to be without necessitie, & whiderto euery wizt that hath good understandyng, is seen these thinges to be repugnaunt. Prescięce of God, which that foloweth necessitie, and libertie of arbitrement, fro which is removed necessitie, for truly it is necessarie, that God haue forweting of thinge, withouten any necessitie comming. Ye (q I) but yet remeue ye not awaie fro mine understanding, the necessitie following Goddes before weting, as thus. God before wote me in seruice of Loue, to bee bounden to this Margarite perele, and therefore by necessitie; thus to loue am I bound, and if I not had loued, through necessitie had I been kept from all loue dedes. Certes (q Loue) bicause this matter is good and necessary to declare, I think herein wel to abide, & not lightlie to passe. Thou shalt not (q she) saie all onely God before wote, me to be a louer, or no louer, but thus: God before wote me to be a louer, without necessitie. And so it followeth, whither thou loue, or not loue, euery of hem is and shalbe But now thou seest the impossibilitie of the case, and the possibilitie of thilke that thou wendest had been impossible, wherefore the repugnaunce is annulled. Ye (q I) and yet doe ye not awaie the strength of necessitie, when it is said, though necessitie it is me in loue to abide, or not to loue without necessitie, for God before wote it. This maner of necessitie forsothe, semeth to some men into coaccion, that is to saine, constrainyng, or els prohibicion that is defendyng, wherefore necessitie is me to loue of wil. I understande me to be constrained, by some priuie strengthe, to the will of louyng, and if no loue to be defended from the will of louing, and so through necessitie me semeth to loue for I loue, or els not to loue, if I not loue, wherethrough neither thanke ne maugre, in tho thynges maie I deserue.

Now (q she) thou shalte well understande that often wee saine thyng, through necessitie, to bee that by no strengthe, to bee neither is coarted, ne constrained, and thorowe necessitie not to bee, that with no defendyng is removed, for wee saine, it is thorowe necessitie, GOD to bee immortalle nought dedliche, and it is necessitie, God to bee rightfull, but not that any strengthe of violence maner constraineth hym to be immortall, or defendeth hym to be vnrightful for nothing maie make him dedly or vnrizt full. Right so if I saie through necessitie is the to be a louer or els none, only thorow will, as God before wete. It is not to understāde, that any thing defendeth or forbit thee thy wil, which shal not be, or els cōstraineth it to be, which shalbe: that same thing

forsoth God before wot, whiche he beforne seeth, any thyng commende of onely wille, that wil neither is constrained ne defended through any other thinge. And so through libertie of arbitremēt it is doe, ẏ is doen of wil. And truely my good child, if these thynges be wel vnderstād, I wene that none inconuenient shalt thou finde, betwene Goddes forweting, and libertie of arbitrement, wherefore, I wote well thei maie stande togider. Also farthermore, who that vnderstandyng of prescience, properliche considereth, through thesame wise, that any thing be afore wist, is saied for to be comyng, it is pronounced, there is nothing toforne wist, but thyng commyng, fore wetyng is but of trouth, doubt maie not be wist: wherefore, whē I sey, that God toforn wot any thyng, through necessitie is thilke thing to be comming, all is one if I sey, if it shalbe, but this necessitie neither constraineth, ne defendeth any thing to be, or not to be. Therfore sothly if loue is put to be, it is saied of necessitie to be, or els for it is put not to be, it is affirmed not to be of necessitie: not for that necessitie constraineth or defendeth, loue to bee, or not to be. For when I saie, if loue shalbe of necessitie it shalbe, here foloweth necessitie. The thing toforne put, it is as moche to saie, as if it were thus pronounced, that thing shall bee: none other thing signifieth this necessitie but onely thus, that shall bee maie not togider be and not bee. Euenliche also it is soth, loue was and is, and shal be, not of necessitie, and nede is to haue be all ẏ was, and nedefull is to bee all that is, and coming to all that shall be: and it is not the same to saie, loue to be passed, and loue passed to be passed, or loue present to be present and loue to be present, or els loue to be commyng, and loue comming to be commyng: diuersitie in setting of wordes, maketh diuersitie in vnderstanding, altho in thesame sentence, thei accorden of significacion, rizt as it is not all one: loue swete to be swete, & loue to be swete: for moch loue is bitter and sorowfull ere hartes been eased, and yet it gladdeth thilk sorowfull hart on soche loue to thinke. Forsoth (ꝙ I) otherwhile I haue had mokell blisse in hart of loue, that stoūdmele hath me sorily anoied: and certes lady for I see my self thus knit, with this Margarite perle, as by bonde of your seruice, & of no libertie of will, my hart will now not accorde this seruice to loue. I can demin in my self none otherwise, but through necessitie am I constrained, in this seruice to abide. But alas then, if I through needefull compulsion, maugre me be with holde, little thanke for all my great trauaile, haue I then deserued. Now (ꝙ this ladie) I saie as I saied: Me liketh this matter to declare at the full, and why: For many men haue had diuers fantasies and reasons, bothe on one side therof, and in the other. Of which rizt sone I trowe, if thou wilt vnderstand, thou shalt con yeue the sentence, to ẏ partie more probable by reason, and in sothe knowing, by that I haue of this matter maked an ende. Certes (ꝙ I) of these things, long haue I had greate luste to bee learned, for yet I wene Goddes will and his prescience, accordeth with my seruice, in louynge of this precious Margarite perle. After whō euer in my harte, with thursting desire weete I doe brenne, vnwastyng I langour and fade and ẏ daie of my destinie, in death or in ioye I vnbide, but yet in the ende I am comforted bee my supposaile in blisse, and in ioye to determine after my desires. That thyng (ꝙ Loue) hastelie to thee neigh, God graunt of his grace and mercie, and this shalbe my praier, till thou be likened in harte at thine own wil. But now to enforme thee in this matter (ꝙ this Ladie) thou woste where I left, ẏ was loue to be swete, and loue swete to bee swete, is not all one for to saie: For a tree is not alwaie by necessitie white, somtime er it wer white, it might haue bee not white: and after time it is white, it maie be not white: but a white tree euermore nedefull is to be white: for neither toforne ne after it was white, might it be togider white and not white. Also loue by necessitie is not present as now in thee, for er it wer present it might haue be, ẏ it should now not haue be, and yet it may be, that it shal not be present: but thy loue presēt, whiche to her margarite ẏ hath bound, nedefull is to be presēt Truly some doing of acciō, not by necessitie is coming farre toforn it be, it maie be that it shal not be coming: thing forsoth coming nedefull is to be coming, for it maie not be that coming shall not be coming. And rizt as I haue saied of present and of future tymes, thesame sentence in sothnesse is of the preterit, that is to say, time passed, for thing passed must nedes be passed, and er it were it might haue not be, wherefore it should not haue passed. Right so when Loue comyng,

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is saied of loue that is to come, needefull is to be that is said, for thing comming neuer is not commyng, and so oft thesame thyng, we saine of thesame, as when we saine euery man is a man, or euery louer is a louer, so must it bee nedes, in no waie maie he bee man, and no man togither. And if it be not by necessitie, that is to say, nedeful al thing comming to be comming, then some thyng comming is not comming, and that is impossible, right as these termes nedefull, necessitie, and necessarie, betoken and signifiyng nedes to be, & it maie not otherwise be. Right these termes, impossible signifieth, that thing is not, and by no waie maie it be then through perte necessite, all thing comming is comming, but that is by necessitie, foloweth with nothing to bee constrained. Lo when that commyng is saied of thyng, not alwaie thinge through necessitie is, altho it bee comyng. For if I saie to morowe, loue is comyng in this Margarites harte, not therefore through necessitie shall thilke loue be, yet it maie be ỹ it shall not be, altho it were comyng. Neuerthelater, sometyme it is sothe, that some thyng be of necessitie, that is saied to come: an if I saie to morowe by commyng the rising of the Sonne. If therfore with necessitie, I pronounce commyng of thyng to come, in this maner loue to morne commyng in thine Margarite, to thee warde by necessitie is commyng, or els the rising of the Sonne to morn comming through necessitie is commyng. Loue sothlie, whiche maie not bee of necessitie alone sollowyng, through necessitee commyng it is made certain. For futur of future is said, that is to saine, commyng of commyng is said: as if to morowe commyng, is through necessitee coming it is. Arising of the sonne through twoo necessities in commyng, it is to vnderstande, that one is to forgoyng necessitee, whiche maketh thing to bee, therefore it shall be, for nedefull is that it be. Another is folowing necessitie, which nothing constraineth to bee, and so by necessitie it is to come, why: for it is to come.

Now then, when we saine, that God beforne, wote thyng commyng nedefull, is to be commyng, yet therefore maie we not in certaine, euermore thyng to be through necessitie commyng. Sothly thing commyng maie not bee, not commyng by no waie, for it is thesame sentence of vnderstandyng: as if wee saie thus. If God beforne wotte any thing, nedefull is that to be comming. But yet therfore foloweth not that prescience of god, thing through necessitie to be coming: for altho God tofore wot all thinges comming, yet not therfore he beforn wot euery thing coming throw necessitie. Sum thinges he beforn wot coming of frewill, out of reasonable creature. Certes (q I) these termes, nede and necessitie, haue a queint maner of vnderstandyng, thei woulden dulley many mēnes wittes. Therfore (q he) I woi yem openly declare, and more clerely then I haue tofore ner I depart hense. Here of this matter (q he) thou shalte vnderstande, that right as it is not nedeful, God to wiln that he wil, no more in many things is not nedefull, a man to wilne that he woll And euer right as needefull is to bee, what that God woll, right so to bee it is nedefull, that man woll in tho thinges, whiche that God hath put into mannes subiection of willyng: as if a man wol loue, that he loue: and if hene woll loue, that he loue not, and of sothe other things in mans disposicion. For why: now then that God woll maie not be, when he woll the will of mā throw no necessitie to be constrained, or els defended for to wiln and he woll theffect to folowe the will, thā is it nedefull wil of man to be free, and also to be that he woll. In this maner it is soth that throw necessitie is mans werke in louing, that he woll dooe altho he woll it not with necessitie. (q I thā) how stāt it in loue of thilke will, sithen men louen willyng of free choise in hart. wherfore if it be throw necessitie, I praie you Ladie of an answere this questiō to assoile. I woll (q she) answer thee bliuely: right as men will not throw necessitie, rizt so is not loue of wil throwe necessitie, ne throwe necessitie wrouzt the ilke same will, for if he would it not with good will, it should not haue been wrouzt, although that he doesh it is nedefull to bee doen. But if a mā do sinne, it is nothing els but to will, that he should not: rizt so syn of will, is not to be maner necessary dooen, no more then wil is necessary. Neuer the later this is soth, if a man woll sinne, it is necessary him to sinne, but though thilk necessitie, nothing is constrained ne defēded in the will, right so thilk thing that frewill woll and maie, and not maie, not wiln, and nedefull is that to wilne he maie not wilne, but thilke to wilne nedefull is, for impossible to hym it is one thing, and thesame to wilne,

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he maie not wilne, but thilk to wilne nedefull is: for impossible to hym it is one thing and the same to wilne, and not to wilne.

The werke forsothe of wille, to whom it is yeue, that it be that he hath in will, and that he woll not, voluntarie of spontanie it is, for by spontanie will it is dooe, that is to saie, with good wil, not constrained: then by will not constrained, it is constrained to bee, and that is it maie not togither bee. If this necessitie maketh libertie of will, whiche that afore ne thei weren, thei might haue been eschued and shonned: God then, which that knoweth all truthe, and nothyng but truthe, all these thinges, as thei arne spontanie, or necessarie sight, and as he seeth so thei been: and so with these thyngs well cõsidered, it is open at the fulle, that without all maner repugnaunce, God before wote al maner things been doen by frewill, whiche afore ne thei weren, might haue been neuer thei should be, and yet been thei thorow a maner necessitie, from frewill discendeth.

Hereby maie (q she) lightly been knowe that not all thinges to bee is of necessitie, though God haue hem in his prescience, for somthinges to be, is of libertie of will: and to make thee to haue full knowyng, of goddes before weting, heare me (q she) what I shal saie. Blithly lady (q I) me lift this matter entirely to vnderstande. Thou shalte (q she) vnderstande, that in heauen is Goddes being, although he be ouer al by power, yet there is abiding of diuine persone, in which heauen is euerlastyng presence, withouten any mouable tyme there, foole haue I not saied tofore ne this, as tyme hurteth, right so ayen warde, tyme healeth and rewardeth: and a tree oft failed, is holde more in deintie, when it fruict forthe bringeth.

A Marchaunte that for ones lesyng in the Sea, no more to auenture thinketh, he shall neuer with auenture come to richesse: so oft must menne on the Ohe smite, till the happie dente haue entred, whiche with the Ohes owne swaie, maketh it to come all at ones. So oft falleth the lethy water on the harde rocke, till it haue thorough persed it. The euen draught of the wier drawer, maketh the wier to been euen, and supplie werchyng, & if he stinted in his draught, ỹ wier breaketh a sonder. Euery Tree well springeth, when it is well grounded, and not often remoued. What shall this fruicte bee (q I) now it ginneth ripe: Grace (q she) in parfite ioye to endure, and therewith thou begon. Grace (q I) me thinketh, I should haue a reward for my long trauaile: I shall tell thee (q she) tribucion of thy good willes, to haue of thy Margarite perle, it beareth not the name of mede, but onely of good grace, and that cometh not of thy delert, but of thy Margarites goodnesse, and bertue alone. (Quod I) should all my long trauaile haue no reward, but thorough grace, and sometyme your selfen saied, righwisenesse euenliche rewardeth to quite one benefite for an other. That is sothe (q Loue) euer as I saied, as to hym that doeth good, whiche to doen he were neither holden, ne yet cõstrained. That is sothe (q I). Truely (q she) all that euer thou doest thyne Margarite perle of will, of loue, and of reason thou owest to doen it. yet is it nothyng els but yeldyng of thy debte, in quiting of thy grace, which she thee lente, when ye first mette. I wene (q I) right little grace to me she deliuered. Certes it was harde grace, it hath nigh me astrangled. That it was good grace I wotte well thou wilt it graunte, ere thou departe hence. If any man yeue to an other wight. to whõ that he ought not, and whiche that of himself nothyng maie haue, a garmente or a coate, though he weare the coate, or els thilke clothyng, it is not to put to him that was naked, the cause of his clothyng, but onelie to him that was yeuer of the garmẽt wherefore I saie, thou that were naked of loue, and of thy self none haue mightestte, it is not to put to thyne owne persone, sithen thy loue came thorough thy Margarit perle Ergo she was yeuer of the loue, although thou it vse, and there sente she thee grace, thy seruice to beginne. She is worthie the thanke of this grace, for she was the yeuer.

All the thoughtes, busie dooynges, and pleasaunce in thy might, and in thy woordes, that thou canste deuise, been but right little, in quityng of thy debte: had she not been, soche thyng had not been studied. So all these matters kindlie drawen homward to this Margarite peerle, for from thence were thei borowed, all is hollie her to witte the loue that thou haueft, and thus quiteft thou thy debte, in ỹ thou stedfastlie seruest. And kepe well that loue, I thee rede, that of her thou hast borowed, and vse it in her seruice, thy debte to quite, and then art thou able right sone to haue grace, wherefore after mede, in none value maiest thou looke.

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Thus thy ginnyng and endyng, is but grace alone, and in thy good deseruyng, thy debte thou aquiteste: without grace is nothynge worthe, what so euer thou werche. Thanke thy Margarite of her greate grace that hetherto thee hath guided, and praie her of continuaunce, foorthe in thy werkes hereafter, and that for no mishap thy grace ouerthwartlie tourne. Grace, glorie, and ioye, is comyng through good folkes desertes, and by gettyng of grace therein shullen ende. And what is more glorie, or more ioie then wisedome, and loue in perfite charitie whiche God hath graunted to all tho that well can deserue. And with that this Lady all at ones starte into myne harte: here wol I onbide (ꝙ she) for euer, and neuer woll I gone hence, and I woll kepe thee from medlynge, while me liste here onbide: thyne entremetyng maners, into stedfastnes shullen be chaunged.

SOberliche tho threwe I vp myne iyen, and hugelie tho was I astonied of this sodain aduenture, and faine would I haue learned how vertues shuldē been knowē, in which thynges I hope to God, hereafter she shall me enformē, and namely sithen her resting place is now so nigh at my will: and anone all these thynges that this ladie saied, I remembred me by my self, and reuolued the liues of myne vnderstandyng wittes.

Tho found I fully all these matters, perfitelie there written, how misse rule by fained loue, bothe realmes and cities hath gouerned a greate throwe. Howe lightlie me might the fautes espie, howe rules in loue should been vsed, howe sometyme with fained loue, foule I was begiled, how I should loue haue knowe, and howe I shall in loue with my seruice procede.

Also furthermore, I found of perdurable letters, wonderlie there grauen, these matters, whiche I shall nempne: Certes none age, ne other thing in yearth, maie the least sillable of this in no poinct deface, but clerly as the Sonne, in myne vnderstandyng soule thei shinen. This maie neuer out of my minde, how I maie not my loue keepe, but through willyng in hart: wilne to loue maie I not, but I louyng haue. Loue haue I none, but through grace of this Margarite perle. It is no maner doubte, that will woll not loue, but for it is louyng, as wille woll not rightfully, but for it is rightfull it selue. Also will is not louyng for he woll loue, but he woll loue for he is louyng: it is all one to will to be louing, and louyngs in possession to haue. Right so will woll not loue, for of loue hath he no partie, and yet I denie not louyng, will wilne more loue to haue, which that he hath not, whē he wold more thā he hath, but I say he maie no loue wilne, if he no loue haue, through whiche thilk loue he should wilne: but to haue this louyng will, maie no manne of hym self, but onely through grace toforne gooyng: right so maie no man it keepe, but by grace folowing. Consider now euery man arighe and lette seen if that any wight of himself, mowe this louing well get, and he thereof first nothing haue: for if it should of himself spryng, either it must be willing, or not willynge. Willyng by hymself maie he it not haue, sithen him faileth the matter ẏ shuld it forth bring, the matter him faileth: why? He maie thereof haue no knowing, till whē grace put it in his harte. Thus willyng by himself, maie he it not haue, & not willing maie he it not haue. Parde euery conceipte of euery reasonable creature, otherwise wil not grañt: will in affirmatife with not willing by no waie mow accord. And although this louing woll come in mine hart by frenesse of arbitrement, as in this booke fullie is shewed, yet owe I not therfore as moche alowe my frewill, as grace of that Margarite, to me leaned, for neither might I without grace to forne goyng, and afterwarde folowing, thilk grace get ne kepe, & lese shal I it neuer but if frewill it make, as in willing otherwise then grace hath me graunted. For right as when any persone taketh, willing to be sober, & throweth that awaie willing to bee dronke, or els taketh will of drinking out of measure: which thing anō as it is doen, maketh through his own gilt by frewill, that leseth his grace. In which thing therefore, vpon the nobley of grace I mote trusten, and my busie cure set the ilke grace to kepe, ẏ my freewill otherwise then by reason it should werche, cause not my grace to voide: for thus must I bothe loke to frewill and to grace. For right as naturell vsage, in engendering of children, maie not been without father, ne also but with the mother, for neither father ne mother, in begetting may it lacke: right so grace and frewill

will accorden, and without hem both maie not louyng, will in no partie been getten. But yet is not free will, in gettyng of that thyng, so mokell thãke worthie as is grace, ne in the keepyng thereof, so mocke thanke deserueth, and yet in gettyng and keepyng bothe doen thei accorde. Truelie often time grace, free will helpeth in forbooyng of contrary thynges, that to willyng loue not accorden, & strengthy will aduerlities to withsit, wherefore al together to grace oweth to been accepted, that my willyng deserueth: free will to louyng in this wise is accorded. I remẽber me well how all this booke (who so heede taketh) considereth all thynges, to werchinges of mankinde euenly accordeth, as in turning of this word loue, into trothy, or els right wisenesse, whether that it like. For what thing that falleth to man, in helpyng of free arbitrement, thilke right wisenesse to take, or els to kepe, through whiche a man shall bee saued, of whiche thyng all this booke mencion hath maked, in euerie poinct thereof, grace oweth to be thanked.

Wherefore I saie, euery wight hauynge this right wisenesse, right full is, and yet therefore I feele not in my conscience, that to all right full is behoten the blisse euerlasting, but to hem that been right full, withouten any vnright fulnesse. Some man after some degree, maie right fully been accõpted: as chaffe men in louyng, and yet been thei janglers, and full of enuie pressed: to hẽ shall this blisse neuer been deliuered. For right as very blesse, is wout al maner nede, right so to no man shall it bee yeuen, but to the right full, voide from al maner vnright fulnesse founde, so no man to her blisse shall been folowed, but he be right full, and with vnright fulnesse not bounde, and in that degree fullie bee knowe. This right fulnesse in as mocke as in hymself is, of none euill it is cause, and of all maner goodnesse, truely it is mother. This helpeth the spirite, to withsitte the leude lustes of fleshlie likyng: this strengtheth and mainteineth the lawe of kind, and if that other while, me weneth harme of this precious thinge to followe, therethrough is nothyng the cause, of somwhat els cometh it aboute, who so taketh hede. By right fulnesse forsoth, werne many holie sainctes, good sauour in swetenesse to God almightie, but that to some folkes, thei weren sauour of death into dedly ende, that come not of the sainctes right wisnesse, but of other wicked mennes badnesse hath proceded. Truely the ilke will, whiche that the ladie of Loue me learned, affeccion of wille to nempne, whiche is in willing of profitable thinges, euill is it not, but whẽ to fleshly lustes it cõsenteth, ayenst reason of soule: but that this thing more clearely be vnderstande, it is for to knowe, whence, and how the ilke will is so vicious and so readie, euil deedes to performe.

Grace at the ginning, ordeined thilke will in goodnesse, euer to haue endured, and neuer to badnesse haue assented: menne should not bileue, that God thilke wil maked to be vicious. Our firste father as Ãdã and Eue, for vicious appetites, and vicious wille to soche appetites consentyng, been not on thing in hinde, other thyng is dooen for the other. And how this will first into manne, first assented, I holde it profitable to shewe: but if the first condicion of reasonable creature, woll be considered and appertly loked, lightly the cause of soche wille maie been shewed. Intencion of God was, that right fully and blessed, should reasonable nature been maked, himself for to kepe, but neither blissfull ne right full, might it not be, withouten will in them bothe. Will of right fulnesse is the ilke same right fulnesse, as heretofore is shewed: but wil of blisse is not the ilke blisse, for euery manne hath not thilke blisse, in whom the will thereof is abiding. In this blisse after euery vnderstandyng, is sufficisaunce of couenable comoditees, without any maner nede, whether it bee blisse of Angels or els the ilke, that grace first in paradise suffred Adam to haue. For although Angels blisse bee more then Adams was in paradise, yet maie it not be denied, that Adã in Paradise, ne had sufficisaunce of blisse: for right as greate harte is without al maner of coldnesse, and yet maie an other hart more heate haue, right so nothing defended Adam in Paradise to been blissed, without all maner nede.

Although Angels blisse bee mocke more, forsothe it followeth not lasse then an other to haue therefore hym needeth, but for to wante a thynge, whiche that behoueth to been had, that maie neede been cleaped, and that was not in Adam, at the first ginning God & the Margarite weten what I mean. Forsothe where as is neede, there is wretchednesse, good without cause to fornegoyng, made not reasonable creature wretched

ched, for him to vnderstande and loue hadde he first maked. God made therfore mā blissed without all maner indigence, togither and at ones toke reasonable creature blysse, and of wil of blissednesse, and will of rightfulnes, whiche is rightfulnes it selue, and libertie of arbitrement, that is fre wil, with which thilke righfulnes may he kepe and lese. So & in that wise ordained thilke two, that wil whiche that instrumente is cleaped, as here toforne mencion is maked, shulde vse thilke rightfulnes, by teachinge of his soule to good maner of gouernaūce, in thought and in wordes, & that it shoulde vse the blisse in obedient maner, withoutē anie incōmodite. Blisse forsothe in to mās profite, and rightwisnes in to his worship God deliuered at ones: but rightfulnesse so was yeuen that man might it lese, whiche yf he not loste had not, but cōtinuelly haue it kept, he should haue deserued the auauncement in to the felowshippe of angels, in whiche thing if he that loste, neuer by him selfe forwarde shulde he it mow ayenward recouer: and as wel the blisse that he was in, as aungeles blisse that to him wardes was coming, shuld be nome at ones, and he depriued of them bothe. And thus fyl man vnto likenesse of vnreasonable beestes, and with hem to corrupcion and vnlustes apetites was he vnder throwne, but yet wil of blisse dwelleth, that by indigence of good, which that he lost through great wretchednes, by right shulde he hē punished. And th⁹ for he weiued rightfulnes, loste hath he his blisse: but faile of his desire in his owne commodite maye he not, and were commodites to his reasonable nature, whiche he hath loste may he not haue. To false lustes, whiche ben bestial appetites he is turned: folye of vnconning hath him begiled, in wening that thilk bē the comodites that owen to ben desired. This affection of will by liberte of arbitremēt is enduced to wiln thus thing that he shulde not, and so is wil not maked yuel but vnrightful, by absence of rightfulnes, which thing by reason euer shulde he haue. And frenesse of arbytremēt may he not wilne whā he it not haueth, for while he it had, thilke helpe it not to kepe: so that without grace may it not ben recouered. Wil of comodite, in as moche as vnrightful it is maked, by willing of yuel lustes, willing of goodnesse may he not wilne for wil of instrument to affection of wil is thralled, sithen that other thing may not it wilne, for wil of instrument to affecciō desireth, and yet ben bothe they wil cleped: for that instrument woll, through affection it wylneth, and affecion desireth thilke thing wherto instrument him ledeth. And so frewel to vnlusty affecion ful seruaunt is maked, for vnrightfulnes maye he not releue, and without rightfulnes ful fredome may it neuer haue. For kindly liberty of arbitrement without it, veine and ydel is forsoth. Wherfore yet I say, as often haue I said the same, whan instrument of will loste hath rightfulnes, in no maner but by grace may he ayen retourne righthfulnes to wilne. For sithen nothinge but rightfulnes alone shuld he wilne, what that euer he wilneth without rightfulnes, vnrighfully he it wilneth. These than vnrighful appetites and vnthrifty lustes which the flies desireth, in as mokel as they ben in kinde, ben they not bad, but they ben vnrightful and badde, for they bē in resonable creature, wher as they beynge in no way shuld ben suffred. In vnreasonable beestes neither ben they yuel ne vnrighful, for there is their kinde beyng.

Knowen may it wel ben now, of these thinges toforne declared, that man hath not alwai thilk rightfulnes, which by dute of right euermore hauen he shuld, and by not way by him self maye he it get ne kepe, and after he it hath if he it lese, recouer shall he it neuer, without especial grace: wherfore the comune sentence of the people in opinion, that euerye thinge after destenie is ruled, false and wicked is to beleue: For thoughe predestinaciō be as wel of good as of badde, sithē ẏ it is said god hadnest made, whiche he neuer ne wrought, but for he suffreth hē to be maked, as that he hardeth whan he nought missaieth, or ledde into temptacion whan he not deliuereth, wherfore it is none inconuenient if in that maner be said, God toforne haue destenied both badde, ende her badde werkes, whan hem ne their yuel dedes neither amendeth, ne therto hem grace leueth. But specyallyche predestinacion of goodnes, alone is saide by these great clerkes, for in him God doth ẏ they ben, & that is goodnes they werchen. But the negatife herof in badnesse is holden, as the lady of loue hath me lerned, who so aright in this booke loketh. And vtterly it is to weten,

that predestinacion properly in God maye not been demed, no more than beforne weting. For in the chapitre of goddes beforne weting, as loue me rehersed, al these maters apertely maye ben foundē. Al thinges to God been nowe togither and in presence duringe. Trewly presence and predestinacion in nothing disacorden, wherfore as I was lerned, howe goddes before wetyng & fre choice of will mowe stonden togither, me thinketh the same reason me leadeth, that destenie & frewil acorden, so that neither of hem both to other in nothinge contrarieth. And reasonabliche may it not ben demed, as oftē as any thing falleth frewil werching, as if a man another man wrong fully anoyeth, wherfore he him sleeth, that it bee constrained to that ende, as mokell folke crieth and saithe: Lo, as it was destenied of God toforne know, so it is thorowe necessite fal, and other wise might it not be tide. Trewlye neither he that the wronge wrought, ne he that him selfe venged, none of thilke things thorow necessite wrought: for if ẏ with frewil ther had it not willed, neither had wrought that he perfourmed: and so vtterly grace that frewil in goddnes brīgeth and kepeth, and fro badnes it tourneth, in al thinge moste thanke deserueth. This grace maketh sentence in vertue to abyde, wherfore in body and in soule in full plentie of conninge, after their good deseruing in the euerlastinge ioye, after the daye of dome shul they endles dwel, and they shul ben lerned that in kingdome with so mokel affecte of loue and of grace, that the lest ioy shal of the greatest in glorie reioyce & been gladded, as if he the same ioye had. What wonder sith God is the greatest loue, and theene ought to loke thinges with resonning to proue, and so is instrument of wil, will: and yet varieth he frō effecte & vsinge both. Affeccion of wil also for wil is cleped, but it varieth from instrument in this maner wise, by that name, liche whā it cometh in to minde, anon right it is in willing desired, and the negatife therof with willing my not acorde: this is closed in hert, though vsage and instrument slepe. This slepeth whan instrument & vs waken: and of soche maner affection trewelye, some man hath more, & some man lesse. Certes trewe louers wenen euer therof to litell to haue. False louers in litell wenen haue right mokell Lo instrumente of will in false and trewe hothe euenlich is proporcioned, but affection is more in some place than in some, bycause of goodnes ẏ foloweth & that I think hereafter to declare. Use of this instrumēt is wil, but it taketh his name whā wilned thinge is in doiynge. But vtterly grace to catch in thy blisse, desired to ben rewarded. Thou muste haue than affection of will at the ful, and vse whan his tyme asketh wysely to ben gouerned. Sothly my disciple without feruent affection of will maye no man ben saued: this affectiō of good seruice in good loue, may not ben grounded, without feruent desire to the thinge in will coueited. But he that neuer retcheth to haue or not to haue, affecion of will in that hath no resting place. Why? for whan thinge cometh to minde and it bee not taken in hede to comin or not come, therfore in that place affection faileth: & for thilke affection is so litel, thorow whiche in goodnes he shoulde come to his grace, the litelnes wil it not suffre to auaile by no waye in to his helpes: Certes grace and reson thilke affection foloweth. This affection with reason knitte, dureth in eueriche trewe herte, & euermore is encreasing, no ferdnes, no strength may it remoue while truthe in herte abideth. Sothly whan falshed ginneth entre, truth draweth away, grace and ioy both, but thā thilke falshed that trouth hath th⁹ voided hath vnknit the bonde of vnderstandinge reason, bytwen wil & the hart. And who so that bonde vndoth, and wnknitteth wil to be in other purpose thā to the first accorde, knitteth him with contrary of reason, and that is vnreason. Lo, than will & vnreason bringeth a man frō the blisse of grace, whiche thing of pure kinde, euery mā ought to shonne & to eschew, and to the knot of wil & reason confirme. Methinketh (ꝙ she) by thy studient lokes, thou wenest in these wordes me to contrarien, from other sayinges here toforne in other place, as whan thou were somtime in affectiō of will, to thinges that now han brought the in disease, whiche I haue the coūsailed to voide, & thin hert discouer, & there I made thy wil to ben chaunged, whiche now ẏ wenest I argue to witholde & to kepe. Shortlye I say ẏ reuers in these wordes may not bē foūde: for though dronkenes be forboden, mē shull not alway ben drinkles. I trow right for thou thy wil out of reason shulde not tourne, thy will in one reason shuld not vnbinde, I say thy wil in thy

in thy firste purpose with vnreason was closed: Construewe forth of the remnaunte what the good liketh. Trewly that wil and reason shuld be knit togither was frewil of reason, after time thine herte is assentaunt to them both, thou myght not chaūge, but if thou frō rule of reason varye, in whiche variaunce to come to thilke blisse desired, cō trariously thou wercheste: and nothing may know wil & reason but loue alone. Than if thou voide loue, thā weuest the vonde, that knitteth, & so nedes or els right lightly, ẏ other gon a sondry, wherfore thou sest apertly ẏ loue holdeth this knot, and amaistreth hem to be bounde. These thinges, as a ring in circuit of wreth bē knit in thy soule with out departing. I let be, let be (q I) it nedeth not of this no rehersaile to make, my soule is yet in parfite blisse, in thinkīg of ẏ knot.

Ow trewly lady I haue my grounde wel vnderstond, but what thinge is thilke spire that in to a tree shoulde were: Expowne me ẏ thing, what ye therof meane. That shal I (q she) blithlie, and take good hede to ẏ wordes I the rede. Continuaunce in thy good seruice, by long processe of tyme in full hope abiding, without any chaūge to wilne in thyn hert: this is ẏ spire, whiche if it be well kept & gouerned, shal so hugely sprīg, til the fruit of grace is plētuously out sprōgen: For all though thy will be good, yet may not therfore thilke blisse desired, hastely on the discēden, it must abyde his seasonable tyme. And so by proces of growing, w thy good traueile, it shall in to more & more were, til it be foūde so mighty, that windes of yuel speche, ne scornes of enuie, make nat the trauaile ouerthrow, ne frostes of mistrust, ne hailes of ielousy right litel might haue in harming of soch sprīnges. Euery yong setling lightly with smal stormes is a peired, but whā it is woxen sōdele in greatnes, thā han great blastes and wethers but litel might, any disauaūtage to hem for to werche. Mine owne souerain lady (q I) & welth of mine hert, and it were lyking vnto your noble grace, therthrough nat to be displeased, I supose ye erren, now ye maken ielosy enuy, & distourbour to hem that ben your seruaūtes. I haue lerned ofte tofore this time, that in euery louers hert great plentie of ielousies greues ben sowe, wherfore me thinketh ye ne ought in no maner accompte, thilke thing amōge these other welked winers & venomous serpētes, as enuy, mistrust, & yuel speche. O foole (q she) mistrust with folȳ, with yuel wil medled engendreth ẏ welked padde. Trwely if they were distroied ielousy vndowne were for euer, & yet some maner of ielousy, I wot wel is euer redy in al the hertes of my trew seruaūtes, as thus: to be ielous ouer him self, lest he be causeof his owne disease.

This ielousye in ful thought, euer shuld be kept for ferdnes to lese his loue by mishepīg thorowe his owne doing in leudnes, or els thus: Lest she that ÿ seruest so feruently is beset ther her better lyketh, ẏ of al thy good seruice she cōpteth nat a cresse. These ielousies in hert for acceptable qualitees ben demed: these oughtē euery trew louer by kindely, euermore hauen in his minde, til fully the grace & blisse of my seruice be on hī discended at wil. And he that than ielousy catcheth, or els by wening of his owne folishe wilfulnes mistrusteth, treuly with fantasy of venim, he is soule begiled. yuel wil hath groūded thilke mater of sorow in his leude soule, & yet nat for thā to euery wight shuld me not trust, ne eueri wight fully misbeleue the meane of these thinges owen to be bled Sothly withoutē causeful cuidēce, mistrust in ielousye, shulde not be wened in no wise person comēly, soch leude wickednes shulde me nat finde. He that is wise & with yuell wil nat be a comered, cā abyde wel his time til grace & blisse of his seruice folowīg haue him so mokel eased, as his abidinge tofore hande hath him diseased. Certes lady (q I tho) of nothing me wondreth, sithen thilke blisse so precious is & kindly, good & wel is, & worthy in kind, whā it is medleth w loue & reason, as ye tofore haue declared. Why, anon as hie one is sprōg, why sprīgeth not the tother: & anone as the one cometh, why receiueth not the other: For euery thīg that is out of his kindly place, by full appetite, euer cometh thyderward kindly to drawe, & his kindely being therto him constraineth. And the kindly stede of this blisse, is in soch wil medled to vnbide, & nedes in ẏ it shuld haue his kindely beyng. Wherfore me thinketh anon as that wil to be shewed, & kinde him profereth, thilke blisse shulde hym hye thilke wil to receyue, or els kind of goodnes worchē not in hem as they shuld. Lo, be the sonne neuer so ferre, euer it hath hys kynde

werchig in erth: great weizt on hie on loft caried, stinteth neuer til it come to this resting place. Waters to the se ward euer ben they drawing, thing ꝑ is light blythly will not sinke, but euer alcēdeth & vpward draweth. Thus kind in euery thing his kindly course, & his being place sheweth: Wherfore be kinde on this good wil, anon as it were sprōg, this blisse shuld theron discende, her kinde wold they dwelledē togider, & so haue ye said your selfe. Certes (ꝙ she) thyne hert sitteth wonder sore this blisse for to haue, thin herte is sore agreued that it tarieth so longe, & if thou durstest, as me thinketh by thine words, this blisse woldest thou blame But yet I say, thilke blisse is kindely good, & his kindely place in that will to vnbyde. Neuer the later, there cōming togider after kindes ordinaunce nat sodainly may betide it must abide time, as kind yeueth him leue, for if a man, as this wil medled gonne him shewe, and thilke blisse in hasse folowed, so lightly cōming shulde lightly cause going, lōge time of thrusting, causeth drinke to be the more delicious whā it is atasted. Howe is it (ꝙ I than) that so many blisses se I all day at min eye, in the first momēt of a sight with soche wil accord. Ye, & yet other while with wil assenteth, singulerly by him selfe ther reason faileth, trauaile was none, seruice had no time. This is a queint maner thinge, how soche doing cometh aboute. O (ꝙ she) that is thus, the erthe kindely after seasons & times of the yere, bringeth forth immunumerable herbes & trees bothe profitable & other, but soch as men might leaue though they were nought in norishinge to mans kinde seruen, or els soche as tournen soone vnto mennes confusion, in ease that there of they ataste, comen forthe out of the erthe by their owne kind, withouten any manes cure or any busynes in traueile: and the ilke herbes that to mennes liuelode necessarily seruen without, whiche goodly in this life creatures mowen not enduren, and moste ben nourishen to manhind, without great traueile, great tilthe, and longe abiding time, comen not out of the erthe, & it with seed toforne ordained soche herbes to make spring and forthe growe. Right so the parfite blisse, that we haue in meaning of duringe tyme to abide, maye nat come so lightly, but with great traueile & right besy tilth, & yet good seed to be sowe, for oft ꝑ croppe failethe of badde sede, be it neuer so wel traueiled. And thilke blisse thou spoke of so lightly in cōminge, trewely is nat necessary ne abydinge: and but it the better bee stamped, and the venomous ieuse out wrongen, it is likely to enpoisonen all tho that there of tasten. Certes right bitter ben the herbes that shewen first the yere of her own kind. Wel the more is the harueste ꝑ yeldest many graines, tho long and sore it hath ben traueyled. What woldest thou demen yf a man wolde yeue thre quarters of nobles of golde, that wer a precious gift: ye certes (ꝙ I). And what (ꝙ she) thre quarters ful of peerles: Certes (ꝙ I) that were a riche gifte. And what (ꝙ she) of as mokel azure? (ꝙ I) a precious gyfte at ful. Were not (ꝙ she) a noble gifte of all these at ones? In good faith (ꝙ I) for wāting of Englishe naming of so noble a worde, I can not for preciousnesse yeue it a name: Rightfully (ꝙ she) hast thou demed, and yet loue knitte in bertue, passeth al the golde in this erthe. Good wil accordāt to realō, with no maner property may be counteruailed, all the azure in the world is not to accounte in respecte of reason, loue that with good wil and reason accordeth, with non erthely riches maye nat ben amended. This yeft hast thou yeuen I knowe it my self, and thy Margarite thilke gift hath receued, in which thing to reward she hath her self bounde. But thy gift as I said, by no maner riches maye be amended wherfore with thing that may nat be amēded thou shalt of thy margarites right wisnesse be rewarded. Right suffred yet neuer but euery good deede somtyme to be yolde. Al wolde thy Margarite with no rewarde the quite. Right that neuer more dieth thy mede in merite wol puruey. Certes soch sodaine blisse as thou first mēpnest, right wil hē reward as the wel is worthy, & though at thin eye it semeth the rewarde the desert to passe, right can after sende soch biternes euenly it to rewarde: so the sodain blisse by always of reslō in great goodns may not be acompted, but blisse long, both long it abydeth, & endelesse it woll last. Se why thy wil is endelesse, for if thou louedest euer, thy will is euer ther tabide and neuer more to chaunge: euenhed of reward must ben done by right: than muste nedes thy grace & this blisse endelesse in ioy to vnbide. Euenlyche disease alheth euenlyche ioy, whiche hastly thou shalte haue. A (ꝙ I) it suffiseth not than alone good will, be it neuer so well

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with reason medled, but if it be in good seruice long trauailed. And so through seruice should men come to the ioye, and this me thinketh should be the wexing tre of which ye first meued.

Very trouthe (q she) hast thou now conceiued of these thinges in thin hert, hastely shalt thou be able verye ioye and parfite blisse to receiue. And now I wote well thou desyrest to knowe the maner of branches, that out of the tre should spring. Therof lady (q I) hertely I you pray: For than leue I wol, that right soone after I shall ataste of the frute that I so longe haue desired. Thou haste herde (q she) in what wise this tre toforne this haue I declared, as in ground & in stocke of wexing. First the ground shuld be thy frewil ful in thine herte, & the stocke (as I saide) shoud be continuaunce in good seruice, by long time in trauaile, til it were in greatnes right well woren. And whan this tree soche greatnes hath caught, as I haue rehersed, the braunches then that the frute should forth bringe, speche muste they be nedes in voice of prayer, in complaining wise vsed. Out alas (q I tho) he is sorowfully wounded that hideth his speche, and spareth his complaints to make, what shal I speke that care: but paine euē lyke to hel, sore hath me assailed, & so ferforth in paine me throng, that I leue my tre is ser & neuer shal it frut forth bring. Certes he is greatly eased, that dare his preuy mone discouer to a true felow, that conning hath and might wherthrough his pleint in any thing may be amēded. And mokel more is he ioied that with hert of hardines, dare cōplaine to his ladye, what cares that the suffreth, by hope of mercy with grace to be auaūced. Truely I say for me, sithe I came this margarit to serue, durst I neuer me discouer of no maner disease, & wel the later hath min herte hardied soch thinges to done, for the great boūties & worthy refreshements that she of her grace goodlye, without any deserte on my halue ofte hath me rekened, & nere her goodnes the more with grace & with mercy medled, which passē al desertes, traueils, & seruinges, that I in any degre might endite, I wold wen I shuld be without recouer in getting of this blisse for euer. Thus haue I stilled my disease, thus haue I couered my care, that I bren in sorowful anoy, as gledes & coles wasten a fire vnder deed ashen. Wel the hoter is the fire, that with ashen it is ouerlein: right longe this wo haue I suffred. Lo (q Loue) how ẏ farest: me thinketh the palse yuelhath acomered thy wittes, as fast as thou hiest forwarde, anon sodainly backwarde ẏ mouest. Shall nat yet all thy leudnes out of thy braines? dul ben thy skilful vnderstādinges, thy wil hath thy wit so amaistred. Most thou not wel (q she) but euery tree in his sesonable time of bourioning shewe his blomes fro within, in signe of what fruite shuld out of him spring, els the frute for that yere mē halt deliuered, be the groūd neuer so good. And though the stock be mighty at the ful, & the braūches seer & no burions shew, far wel the gardiner he may pipe with an yue leafe his fruite is failed. Wherfore thy braunches must burionen in presence of thy lady, if thou desire any frute of thy ladies grace, but beware of thy lyfe, that ẏ no wo delay vse, as in askīg of thīgs that stretchen in to shame, for than might ẏ not spede by no way that I can espie. Vertue wol not suffre villany out of him self to springe. Thy wordes may not be queint ne of subtel maner vnderstāding. Freelwitted people supposē in soch poesies to be begiled in opē vnderstāding must euery word be vsed. Voice without clere vnderstandinge of sētence, saith Aristotel, right nouzt printeth in hert. Thy wordes then to abide in hert & cleue in ful sentēce of trewe mening platly must thou shew & euer be obediēt, her hestes & her willes to performe, & be ẏ set in soche a wit to wete by a loke euermore what she meaneth. And he ẏ list nat to speke, but stilly his disease suffre: what wōder is it tho he neuer come to his blisse? Who ẏ trauaileth vnwist, & coueiteth thing vnknowe, vnweting he shal be quited, & with vnknow thīg rewarded. Good lady (q I than) it hath ofte be sene, ẏ wethers & stormes so hugely haue fal in burioning tyme, & by perte duresse hā beatē of the springes so clene, wherthrough ẏ frut of thilk yere hath failed. It is a great grace whā buriōs han good wethers, their frutes forth to bring. Alas than after soche stormes howe harde is it to auoide, till efte wedring & yeres hā maked her circute cours al about, er any frute be able to be tasted he is shent for shame, that foole is rebuked of his speche. He that is in fire brenning sore smarteth for disease. Him thinketh ful lōger the water come that shuld the fire quen-

che. Whil men gon after a leche, the body is buried. Lo howe semely this frute wexeth, me thinketh that of tho frutes may no mā atast, for pure bitternes in sauour. In this wise both friut & the trewasten away togider, though mokel bely occupacion haue be spente to bringe it so ferforthe, that it was able to sprig. A litel spech hath maked that al this labour is in ydel. I not (q̄ she) wherof it serueth thy questiō to assoile, me thinketh the now duller in wittes, than whā I with the first mette, although āmā be leude cōmenly for a foole he is not demed, but if he no good wol lerne, sottes & fooles let lightly out of minde, the good that mē teacheth hem. I said therfore thy stocke must be strōg, & in greatnes weiherted, the treis ful feble that at the first dent faileth: and al though frute faileth one yere or two, yet shall soche a seson come one time or other, that shall bring out frute that is nothing preterit, ne passed ther is nothing futur ne coming but al thinges togider in that place ben present euerlasting without any meuing, wherfore to god al thing is as now: & though a thing be nat in hindly nature of thinges as yet, & if it shoud be herafter, yet euermore we shul saye god it maketh be time present, & nowe for no futur ne preterit in him may be told, wherfore his wetinge & his before weting, is al one in understanding. Than if weting & before wetinge of god putteth in necessite to al things which he wot or before wot ne thinge after eternite, or els after anye time he wol or doth of liberte, but al of necessite, which thing if thou wene it be ayenst reasō nat thorowe necessite, to be or nat to be, all thinge that god wot or before wot, to be or nat to be, & yet nothing defēdeth any thing to be wist or to be before wist of him in our willes or our doinges to be done, or els coming to be for fre arbitremēt. Whan ỹ hast these declaracions well understande, than shalte ỹ finde it resonable at proue, & that many thinges be nat thorowe necessite, but thorowe liberte of wil, saue necessite of free wil, as I tofore said: and as me thinketh al utterly declared. Me thinketh lady (q̄ I) so I shoulde you nat displease, and euermore your reuerence to kepe, that these thinges contrarien in any understandynge. for ye sain somtyme is thorowe lybertye of wyll, and also thorowe necessite. Of this haue I yet no sauour, without better declaracion. What wonder (q̄ she) is there in these thinges, sithen al day thou shalt se at thine eye, in manye thinges receiuen in hem selfe reuers, thorowe diuers reasons, as thus. I pray the (q̄ she) whiche thinges been more reuers than comen and gone: for if I bidde thee come to me, & thou come, after whē I bid the go & thou go, thou reuersest fro thy firste comminge. That is sothe (q̄ I) and yet (q̄ she) in thy firste alone by diuers reason was ful reuerlinge to understand. As how (q̄ I) That shall I shewe the (q̄ she) by ensample of thinges that have kindly mouig. Is there any thing that meueth more kindly than doth the heuens ire, which I clepe ỹ sōne. Sothely (q̄ I) me semeth it most kindely to moue. Thou saiest soth (q̄ she). Than if thou loke to the sonne, in what parte he be under heuen, euermore he heigheth him in mouinge fro thilke place, and heigheth meuinge towarde the ilke same place, to thilke place from whiche he gothe he heigheth cōming, and without any ceasinge to that place he neigheth frō which he is chaūged & withdraw. But now in these thinges after diuersite of reasō, reuers in one thing may be sey without repugnaūce. Wherfore in the same wise, without any repugnaūce by my reasones to fore maked, all is one to beleue, somthing to be thorow necessite cōminge for it is coming, and yet with no necessite constrained to be cōminge, but with necessite that comethe out of free will, as I haue said. Tho lift me a litel to speke, & gan stint my penne of my writing, & said in this wise. Trewly lady as me thinketh, I can allege authoritees great that cōtrarien your saiynges. Job saith of mānes person, thou hafte putte his terme, whiche thou might nat passe. Than saye I that no man maye shorte ne length the daye, ordained of his doing, al tho somtime to vs it semeth some man to do a thinge of free wil, wherthorowe his death he henteth. Nay forsothe (q̄ she) it is nothing ayenst my saiyng for God is nat begiled, ne he seeth nothing whether it shall come of liberte or elles of necessite, yet it is said to be ordained at god immouable, whiche at man or it be done maye be chaunged. Soch thing also is that Poule the apostel saith of hem that tofore werne purposed to be saintes, as thus, whiche that god before wist, & hath predestined, conformes of ymages of his sonne, that he shuld ben the firste begeten, that is to say, here amonges many brethern, & whom he hath predestined, hem

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he hath cleped, & whom he hath cleped, hem he hath iustified, and whō he hath iustified, hem he hath magnified. This purpose after whiche thei been cleped sainctes, or holy in ẏ euerlasting present, where is neither time passed, ne time coming, but euer it is onely present, and now as mokell a momente, as vii. M. winter, and so ayenward withoutē any meuing, is nothing iche temporell presence, for thyng that there is euer presente. yet emonges you men, ere it be in your presence, it is mouable through libertie of arbitrement. And right as in the euerlastyng present, no maner thing was, ne shalbe, but onely is, & now here in your temporel time, somē thing was and is, and shalbe, but mouyng stoundes, and in this is no maner repugnāce. Right so in the euerlastyng presence, nothing maie be chaunged: & in your temporel time, other while it is proued mouable, by libertie of will, or it be doe, withouten any inconuenience thereof to folow. In your tēporell tyme is no soche presence, as in the other, for your presente is dooen, when passed & to come ginnen entre, which times here emongs you, euerich easily foloweth other, but the presēte euerlastyng, dureth in onehed, withouten any imaginable chaunging, and euer is presente and nowe. Truly the course of the planettes, and ouerwhelminges of the Sonne, in daies & nightes, with a newe ginning of his circuite after it is ended, that is to sain, one yere to folowe an other. These maken your transitorie times, with chaūgyng of liues, and mutacion of people. But right as your temporell presence, coueiteth euery place, and all thinges in euery of your times be cōtained, and as now both sey and wist to Gods very knowing. Thā (q I) me wōdreth why Poule spake these wordes, by voice of significaciō in time passed, that God his sainctes before wist, hath predestined, hath cleped, hath iustified, and hath magnified: me thinketh he should haue said tho wordes in time presēt, and that had been more accordaunte, to the euerlasting presente, then to haue spoke in preterit voice of passed vnderstandyng. O (q loue) by these wordes, I se well thou hast litle vnderstanding of ẏ euerlasting presence, or els of my before spoken wordes, for neuer a thing of tho thou haste nempned, was to fore other, or after other, but al atones euēliche, at the God been, and al togider in the euerlasting presente, bee now to vnderstandyng, the eternall presence, as I saied, hath inclose togider in one all tymes, in whiche close & one all thinges, that been in diuers times, and in diuers places temporel, without posteriorite or priorite, been closed therein perpetuall nowe, and maked to dwell in present sight. But there thou saiest ẏ Poule should haue spoke thilke forsaid sentence be time present, & that moste should haue been accordaunt, to the euerlasting presence, why gabbest thou to thy wordes? Sothlie I saie Poule moued the wordes, by significaciō of time passed, to shewe fullie that thilke wordes, wer not put for tēporell significacion, for al thilke time wer not thilk sentence tēporalliche borne, whiche ẏ Poule pronounced, God haue tofore know, and haue cleped then magnified, wherthrough it maie well be know, ẏ Poule vsed tho wordes of passed significacion, for nede and lacke of a worde in mans bodily speach, betokening the euerlasting presence. And therfore word is most semelich in likenesse to euerlasting presēce, he tooke his sentence for thinges, that here beforne been passed, vtterly be immouable, ilike to the euerlasting presence. As thilke ẏ been, there neuer mowe not been present, so thinges of time passed, ne mowe in no wise not been passed: but all thinges in you temporall, presence that passen in a litle while, shullen been not present. So then in that it is more similitude to the euerlastyng presence, significacion of tyme passed, that of time temporall presente, and so more in accordaunce. In this maner what thynge of these that been dooen through free arbitrement, or els as necessarie, holy writ pronoūceth, after eternitie he speaketh, in whiche presence is euerlastyng soth, & nothing but soth immouable, that after tyme, in which naught alwaie been your willes & your actes, and right as while thei be not, it is not nedefull hem to be: so oft it is not nedefull, that sometyme thei should be. As how (q I) for yet must I be lerned, by some ensample. Of loue (q she) wol I now ensample make, sithen I knowe the hed knot in that yelke. Lo, sometyme thou writest no arte, ne arte then in no wil to write, and right as while thou writest not, or els wolt not write, it is not nedefull ẏ to write, or els wiln to write.

And for to make thee knowe vtterly, that thynges been otherwise in the euerlastyng presence, thā in temporall time: se now my good child, for somthing is in ẏ euerlasting

presence, then in temporal tyme, it was not in eternitie tyme, in eterne presence shall it not be. Then no reason defēdeth, that some thing ne maie be in tyme tēporell mouing, that in eterne is immouable. Forsothe it is no more contrary ne reuers, for to be mouable in time temporell, and mouable in eternitie, then not to be in any tyme, and to bee alwaie in eternitie, and haue to be, or els to come in tyme temporell, and not haue bee, ne nought commyng to be in eternitie. Yet neuer the later, I saie not somethyng to bee neuer in tyme temporell, that euer is eternitie, but all onely in sometyme not to bee. For I saie not thy loue to morne in no time to be, but to daie alone I deny ne it to bee, & yet neuer the later, it is alway in eternitie.

Also (q I) it semeth to me, that commyng thyng, or els passed, here in your temporall tyme to bee, in eternitie euer now, and present oweth not to be demed, & yet soloweth not thilke thing, that was or els shall be, in no maner therto been passed, or els coming: then vtterly shull wee deny, for there without ceasing, it is in his present maner. O (q she) myne owne disciple, now ginnest thou able to haue the name of my seruaunt. Thy wit is clered, awaie is now errour of cloud in vnconnyng, awaie is blindnesse of loue, awaie is thoughtfull study, of medling maners, hastlie shalte thou entre into the ioye of me, that am thine owne maistres.

Thou haste (q she) in a fewe wordes, well and clerely concluded mokell of my matter. And right as there is no reuers, ne contrariouscie in tho doinges, right so withouten any repugnaunce, it is saied, some thyng to be mouable in time temporell, and for it be, that in eternitie dwelleth immouable, not afore it bee, or after that it is, but without cessing, for right naught is there after time that same is there euerlastyng, that temporaliche sometyme nis, and toforne it bee, it maie not be, as I haue saied. Now sothly (q I) this haue I well vnderstāde, so that now me thinketh that prescience of God, and fre arbitrement, withouten any repugnaunce accorden, & that maketh the strēgth of eternitie, whiche encloseth by presence, duryng all tymes, and all thynges that been, han been, and shull been in any tyme.

I would now (q I) a little vnderstande, sithen that all thynge thus beforne wotte, whether thilke wetyng be of tho thynges, or els thilke thynges been to been of Gods wetyng, and so of God nothyng is: and if euery thing bee through Gods weting, and thereof take his being, then should God bee maker and aucthour of badde werkes; and so he should not rightfully punishe euill doinges of mankinde. (q loue) I shall tel thee, this lesson to learne, myne owne true seruaunte, the noble Philosophicall Poete, in Englishe, whiche euermore hym busieth & trauaileth right sore, my name to encrease, wherefore all that willen me good, owe to doe him worship and reuerence both, truly his better ne his pere, in schole of my rules coud I neuer finde: He (q she) in a treatise ẏ he made of my seruaunt Troilus, hath this matter touched, & at the full this question assoiled. Certainly his noble saiyngs, can I not amēd: in goodnes of gētil mālich spech, without any maner of nicitie of starieres imaginacion, in wit and in good reason of sentence, he passeth al other makers. In the boke of Troilus, the answer to thy questiō maiest thou lerne, neuer the later, yet maie lightly thine vnderstanding, somdeale been learned, if thou haue knowyng of these to fornsaid thinges, with that thou haue vnderstāding, of two the last chapiters of this second boke, that is to saie, good to be some thing, and bad to want al maner being, for badde is nothyng els, but absence of good, and that GOD in good, maketh that good deedes been good, in euill he maketh ẏ thei been but naught, that thei been bad: for to nothing is badnesse to bee. I haue (q I tho) inough knowing therein, me needeth of other thinges to heare, that is to saie, how I shall come to my blisse so long desired.

In this matter to forne declared (q Loue) I haue wel shewed, that euery man hath free arbitrement of thinges in his power to doe, or vndoe what hym liketh. Out of this grōnd muste come the Spire, that by processe of tyme, shall in greatnesse sprede, to haue brāches and blosomes, of waxyng fruicte in grace, of whiche the taste and the sauour, is endelesse blisse in ioye euer to onbide.

Now Ladie (q I) that tree to sette faine would I learne. So thou shalte (q she) ere thou departe hence. The firste thynge thou must set thy werke on ground siker & good, accordaunte to thy springes. For if thou desire grapes, thou goest not to the Hasell, ne for to fetchen roses, thou sekest not on okes:

and

and if thou shalt haue Honie soukels, thou leauest the fruict of the soure Docke. Wherfore if thou desire this blisse in parfite ioye, thou must set thy purpose ther vertue folowet̄h, & not to loke after the bodily goodes, as I saied when thou were writyng in thy seconde booke. And for thou hast set thy self in so noble a place, & vtterly lowed in thine harte, the misgoyng of thy firste purpose, this settetes is the easier to spring, and the more lighter thy soule in grace to bee lifted. And truely thy desire, that is to saie, thy will, algates mote been stedfast in this matter, without any chaunging, for if it be sted faste, no man maie it voide. Yes parde (q I) my will maie been tourned by frendes, and disease of manace, and threatning in lesing of my life, and of my limmes, and in many other wise, that now comet̄h not to minde. And also it mote ofte been out of thought for no remembraunce maie hold one thyng continuelly in harte, bee it neuer so lustie desired. Nowe see (q she) thou thy will shall followe, thy frewill to bee grounded, continuelly to abide: It is thy frewill that thou louest and haste loued, & yet shalt louen this Margarite perle, and in thy wil thou thinkeste to holde it. Then is thy will knitte in loue, not to chaunge for no newe lufte beside: This will teacheth thyne harte, from all maner variyng. But then althoughe thou be threatened in death, or els in otherwise, yet is it in thin arbitrement to chose, thy loue to voide, or els to holde: and thilke arbitremente is in a maner a iudgemente, bitwene desire and thy harte. And if thou deme to loue, thy good wil faileth, then art thou worthy no blisse, that good will shuld deserue: and if thou chose continuaunce in thy good seruice, then thy will abideth, nedes blisse folowyng of thy good will, muste come by strengthe of thilke iudgemente: for thy firste will that taught thine harte to abide: and halt it from thexchange, with thy reasō is accorded. Truly this maner of will thus shall abide, impossible it were to turne if thy hart be true, and if euery man diligētly, the meanynges of his will consider, ye shall well vnderstande, that good will knit with reason, but in a false harte neuer is voided: for power and might of keping this good wil, is through libertie of arbitremēt in hart, but good wil to kepe maie not faile Ehe then if it faile, it sheweth it self, ỹ good will in keping is not there. And thus false will that putteth out the good, anone constraineth the harte, to accorde in louyng of thy good will, and this accordaūce bitwene false wille and thyne harte, in falsitie been likened togither. Yet a little woll I saie thee, in good wille, thy good willes to raise and strength. Take hede to me (q she) howe thy willes thou shalte vnderstande. Right as ye han in your bodie diuers members, and fiue sondrie wittes, eueriche aparte to his owne doyng, whiche thynges as instrumentes ye vsen, as your handes apart to hāndle, feete to goe, tongue to speake, iye to see: right so the soule, hath in hym certaine sterynges and strengthes, whiche he vseth as instrumentes, to his certain doynges. Reason is in the soule, whiche he vseth thinges to knowe and to proue, and will, whiche he vseth to wilne: And yet is neither wille ne reason all the soule, but eueriche of hem is a thing by hymself in the soule. And right as euerich hath thus singuler instruments by hem self, thei han as well diuers aptes, and diuers maner vsynges, and thilk aptes mowen in will been cleped affecciōs. Affeccion is an instrumēt of willyng in his apetites. Wherefore mokell folke saine, if a reasonable creatures soule, any thing feruently wilneth, affectuously he wilneth, & thus maie wille by terme of equiuocas, in three waies been vnderstande: one is instrument of willyng, an other is affeccion of this instrumēt: and the third is vse, that setteth it a werke. Instrumente of willing is the ilke strength of the soul, which thee cōstraineth to wiln, right as reason is instrumēt of reasons, which ye vsen when ye loken. Affecciō of this instrument is a thing, by whiche ye be drawe desirously any thing, to wilne in coueitous maner, all bee it for the time out of your mind: as if it come in your thought thilk thing to remember, anon ye been willing thilke to doen, or els to haue. And thus is instrument will, and affeccion is will also, to wilne thing as I saied: as for to wilne helth, when will nothyng theron thinketh for anone as it cometh to memorie, it is in wil, and so is affeccion to wiln slepe, whē it is out of minde, but anon as it is remēbred wil wilneth slepe, when his time cometh of the doing. For affeccion of wil, neuer accordeth to sickneſſe, ne alwaie to wake. Right so in a true louers affecciō of willing instrument, is to wilne truthe in his seruice: and this affecciō alway abideth, although he be

slepyng

sleping or thretned, or els not thereon thinkyng, but anone as it cometh to minde, anone he is stedfast in that will to abide. Use of this instrumēt forsoth is an other thing, by hymself, and that haue ye not but when ye be doyng, in willed thing by affecte or instrument of will, purposed or desired, & this maner of vsage in my seruice, wisely nedeth to be ruled, from waiters with enuie closed from speakers full of iangeling wordes, frō proude folke and hautain, that lambes and innocētes both scornen and dispisen. Thus in doyng, varieth the actes of willing eueriche from other, & yet been thei cleped wil, and the name of will vtterly owen thei to haue, as instrument of wil is will, when ye turne into purpose of any thing to doen, be it to sit or to stande, or any soche thing els. This instrument maie been had, although affecte and vsage be left out of doyng, right as ye haue sight and reason, and yet alway vse ye greatest wisedome in hem shall he be, and thei in God. Nowe then when all false folke be ashamed, which wenen al bestialtie and yerthly thing, be swetter and better to the body, then heauenly is to the soule: this is the grace and the fruict that I long haue desired, it doth me good the sauour to smel. Christe now to thee I crie of mercie and of grace, and graunte of thy goodnes to euery maner reder, full vnderstāding in this leud pamflet to haue, and let no man wene other cause in this werke, then is verily the soth: for enuy is euer redy all innocentes to shēd, wherfore I would ỳ good speach enuie euermore hinder. But no man wene this werke be sufficiently maked, for Gods werke passeth mans, no mannes wit to parfit werke maie by no waie puruaie thende: how shold I then so leude, aught wene of perfeccion any ende to get? Neuerthelater grace, glorie, and laude, I yelde and put with worshipful reuerenced, to the sothfast God in thre, with vnitie closed, whiche that the heuie langor of my sicknesse, hath tourned into mirth of health to recouer: for right as I was sorowed, through the gloton cloud of manifold sickly sorowe, so mirth ayen coming health hath me gladed and greatly comforted. I beseche and praie therfore, and I crie on Gods greate pitie, and on his mokell mercie, that this present scorges of my flesh, now make medicine, and leche craft of my inner mans health, so that my passed trespas and tenes through wepyng of myne yes been washe, and I voided from al maner disease, and no more to wepe hereafter, I now be kept thorow Gods grace: so that Gods hand which thee merciably me hath scorged, hereafter in good plite, frō thence merciably me kepe and defende. In this booke be many priuie thinges wimpled & fold, vnneth shull leude men the plites vnwinde, wherefore I praie to the holy ghoste, lene of his ointmentes, mens wittes to clere, and for Gods loue no man wōder, why or how this question cum to my minde, for my great lustie desire was of this ladie to been enformed, my leudnesse to amende. Certes I know not other mens wittes, what I should aske, or in answere, what I should saie, I am so leude my self, ỳ mokell more learnyng yet me behoueth. I haue made therfore as I could, but not sufficiētly as I would, and as matter yaue me sentence, for my dul wit is hindred, by stepmother of forgetyng, and with cloude of vnconning, ỳ stoppeth the light of my margatite perle, wherfore it maie not shine on me as it should. I desire not onely a good reader, but also I coueite & praie a good booke amender, in correccīō of wordes, and of sentence: and onely this mede I coueite for my trauaile, that euery inseer and herer of this leude fantasie, deuoute horisons & praiers, to God the greate iudge yelden, and praien for me, in that wise that in his dome, my sinnes mow been released and forgeuen: he that praieth for other, for hymself trauaileth. Also I praie that euery man parfitelie mowe knowe, through what intencion of hart, this treatise haue I drawe. How was it the sightfull Manna in desert, to childrē of Israel was spirituell meate: bodily also it was, for mennes bodies it norisheth. And yet neuer ỳ later, Christe it signified. Right so a iewell betokeneth a gemme, and that is a stone vertuous, or els a perle. Margarite a woman betokeneth grace, learnyng, or wisedome of GOD, or els holie Churche. If bread through vertue is made holie flesche, what is that our God saith? It is the spirit that yeueth life, the flesche of nothyng it profiteth. Flesche is fleschly vnderstanding: Flesche without grace and loue naughte is worthe. The letter sleeth, the spirite yeueth lifelich vnderstandyng. Charitie is loue, and loue is Charitie, God graunte vs all therein to be frended. And thus the Testamēt of loue is ended.

Here endeth the testament of Loue.

The

The lamentacion

of Marie Magdaleine.

DOnged in the wawe of
mortall distresse
Alas for wo, to whom shal
I complein
Or who shall deuoide this
greate heuinesse
From me wofull Marie, wo-
full Magdalein
My lord is gon, alas who wrought this trein
This sodain chaunce perseth my hart so depe
That nothing can I do, but waile and wepe.

My lorde is gone, ỹ here in graue was laied
After his greate passion, and death cruell
Who hath hym thus again betraied?
Or what man here about can me tell
Where he is become, the Prince of Israell
Jesus of Nazareth, my ghostly succour
My parfite loue, and hope of all honour.

What creature hath hym hence caried?
Or how might this so sodainly befall?
I would I had here with hym taried
And so should I haue had my purpose all
I bought ointmentes full precious and roial
Where with I hoped his corps to anointed
But he thus gone, my minde is dispointcted.

While I therefore aduertise and beholde
This pitous chaunce, here in my presence
Full little maruaile though my hart be colde
Considryng lo, my Lordes ablence
Alas that I so full of negligence
Should be founde bicause I come so late
All men maie saie I am infortunate.

Cause of my sorowe you maie vnderstande
(Quia tulerunt dominum meum)
In other is, that I ne maie fonde
I wote nere, Vbi posuerunt eum
Thus I must be waile, Dolorem meum
With hartie weping, I can no better deserue
Till death approche, my harte for to kerue.

My harte oppresst with sodaine auenture
By feruent anguishe is be wrapped so
That long this life I maie not endure
Soche is my pain, soche is my mortall wo
Neuertheiesse, to what partie shall I go
In hope to finde myne owne Turtill true
My liues ioye, my souerain Lorde Jesu.

Sith all my ioye, that I call his presence
Is thus remoued, now I am full of mone
Alas the while, I made no prouidence
For this mischap, wherefore I sigh and grone
Succour to finde, to what place might I gon
Fain I would to some man my harte breake
I not to whom I maie complain or speake.

Alone here I stande, full sorie and full sad
Which hoped to haue seen my lorde and kyng
Small cause haue I to be merie or glad
Remembryng this bitterfull departyng
In this worlde is no creature liuyng
That was to me so good and gracious
His loue also then golde more precious.

Full sore I sigh, without comfort again
There is no cure to my saluacion
His brenning loue, my hart so doth constrain
Alas here is a wofull permutacion
Whereof I finde no ioye nor consolacion
Therefore my pain all onely to confesse
With death I feare woll ende my heauinesse.

This wo and anguishe is intollerable
If I bide here, like can I not sustain
If I go hence my paines be vncurable
Where him to finde, I knowe no place certain
And thus I not of these thynges twain
Whiche I maie take, & whiche I maie refuse
My hart is wounded heron to think or muse

A while I shall stande in this mourning
In hope if any vision would appere
That of my loue might tell some good tidyng
Whiche into ioy, might chaunge my wepyng
I trust in his grace and his mercie dere (chere
But at the least, though I therewith me kill
I shall not spare to waile and wepe my fill.

And if that I die in soche auenture
I can no more, but welcome as my chaunce
No bones shall rest here in this sepulture
My life, my death, is at his ordinaunce
It shalbe tolde in euerlasting remembraunce
Thus to departe, is to me no shame
And also thereof I am nothyng to blame.

Hope against me hath her course itake
There is no more, but thus shall I die
I see right well my Lorde hath me forsake
But in my conceipt, cause know I none why
Though he be farre hence, and nothyng nye

Let

yet my wofull harte after hym doeth sehe
And causeth teares to ren doun by my cheke.

Thinking alas, I haue lost his presence
Which in this worlde was all my sustenance
I crie and call with hartie diligence
But there is no wight giueth attendance
Me to certifie of myne enquirance
Wherefore I will to all this worlde bewraie
How that my lorde is slain and borne awaie.

Though I mourne it is no greate wonder
Sithe he is all my ioye in speciall
And now I thinke we be so farre a sonder
That hym to see I feare neuer I shall
It helpeth no more after hym to call
Ne after hym to enquire in any coste
Alas how is he thus gone and loste?

The Jewes I thinke full of miserie
Set in malice, by their busie cure
With force and might of gilefull trecherie
Hath entermined my Lordes sepulture
And borne awaie that precious figure
Leauyng of it nothyng, if thei haue doen so
Marred I am, alas what shall I do.

With their vengeaunce insaciable
Now haue thei hym entreated so
That to reporte it is to lamentable
Thei beate his bodie from toppe to the toe
Neuer man was borne that felte soche woe
Thei wounded hym alas with all greuaunce
The blood doun reiled in most habundaunce

The bloodie rowes stremed doune ouer all
Thei hym assailed so maliciously
With their scourges and strokes beastiall
Thei spared not, but smote incessauntlie
To satisfie their malice thei were full busie
Thei spit in his face, thei smote here and ther
He groned full sore, and sweate many a tere.

Thei crouned hym w̄ thornes sharpe & kene
The vaines rent, the blood ran doun a pace
With blood ouercome were bothe his yen
And bolne with strokes was his blessed face
Thei hym entreated, as men without grace
Thei kneled to hym, and made many a scorne
Like helhoundes thei haue hym all to torne

Upon a mightie crosse in length and brede
These turmentours shewed their curledneſſe
Thei nailed hym without pitie or drede
His precious blood brast out in largenesse
Thei strained hym a long, as men merciless
The verie iointes all to myne apparence
Riued a sonder, for their greate violence.

All this I beholding with mine yen twain
Stode there beside, with rufull attendaunce
And euer me thought, he beyng in that pain
Loked on me, with dedly countenaunce
As he had said in his speciall remembraunce
Farwell Magdalen, depart must I nedes hēs
My harte is Tanquam cera liquescens.

Whiche rufull sight when I gan beholde
Out of my witte I almoste distraught
Tare my heere, my handes wrang and folde
And of ȳ sight my hart drāke soche a draught
That many a fall swounyng there I caught
I bruised my bodie, fallyng on the grounde
Whereof I fele many a greuous wounde.

Then these wretches, full of all frowardneſſe
Gaue hym to drinke Eisell tempred w̄ Gall
Alas, that poison full of bitternesse
My loues chere caused then to appall
And yet thereof might he not drinke at all
But spake these wordes, as him thought best
Father of heauen, Consummatum est.

Then kneled I doune, in paines outrage
Clipping ȳ crosse within myne armes twain
His blood distilled doune on my vilage
My clothes eke the droppes did distain
To haue died for hym I would full fain
But what should it auaile if I did so
Sithe he is, Suspensus in patibulo.

Thus my Lorde full dere was all disgised
With blood, pain and woundes many one
His veines brast, his iointes all to riued
Partyng a sonder the flesshe fro the bone
But I sawe he hing not there alone
For Cum iniquis deputatus est
Not like a man, but like a leprus beest.

A blinde knight men called Longias
With a speare aproched vnto my souerain
Launsyng his side full pitouslie alas
That his precious harte he claue in twain
The purple blood eke fro the hartes vain
Doune railed right fast, in moste rufull wise
With christal water brought out of Paradise

When I beheld this wofull passion
I wote not how, by sodain auenture
My hart was peersed with very compassion

That

That in me remained no life of nature
Strokes of deathe I felte without measure
My deathes woūde I caught, wo oppreſt
And brought to point as my hert ſhuld breſt

The woūde, hert, and blood of my darling
Shal neuer ſlide fro my remorial
The bytter paines alſo of tourmienting
Within my ſoule be grauen principal
The ſpeare alas, that was ſo ſharpe withall
So thrilled my herte, as to my feling
That body and ſoule were at departing

As ſoone as I might I releued vp againe
My brethe I coude not very wel reſtore
Feling my ſelfe drowned in ſo great paine
Both body & ſoule me thought wer al to tore
Violent falles greued me right ſore
I wept, I bledde, and with my ſelfe I fared
As one that for his life nothing had cared

I loking vp to that ruſull Roode
Sawe firſt the viſage pale of that figure
But ſo pitous a ſight ſpotted with bloode
Sawe neuer yet no liuing creature
So it exceded the boundes of meaſure
That mānes minde with al his wittes fiue
Is nothing able, that paine for to diſcriue

Than gan I there min armes to vnbrace
Vp lifting my handes ful mourningly
I ſighed and ſore ſobbed in that place
Both heuen & erth might haue herde me crie
Weping, and ſayd alas inceſſauntly
Ah my ſwete herte, my goſtly paramour
Alas I may nat thy body ſocour

O bleſſed lorde, howe fierſe and howe cruel
Theſe curſed wightes nowe hath the ſlaine
Keruing alas thy body euerideł
Woūde within woūde, ful bytter, is thy pain
Nowe wolde that I might to the attaine
To naile my body faſt vnto thy tree
So that of this paine thou might go free

I can nat reporte ne make no reherſaile
Of my demening, with the circumſtaunce
But wel I wot the ſpeare with euery naile
Thirled my ſoule by inwarde reſemblaunce
Whiche neuer ſhall out of my remembraunce
During my life it wol cauſe me to waile
As ofte as I remembre that batail

Ah ye Jewes, worſe than dogges rabiate
What moued you thus cruelly him to aray
He neuer diſpleaſed you nor cauſed debate
Your loue and true hertes he coueyted aye
He preched, he teched, he ſhewed ỳ right way
Wherfore ye lyke tyrātes wode & way warde
Nowe haue him thus ſlaine for his reward

Ye ought to haue remēbred one thing ſpecial
His fauour, his grace, and his magnificence
He was your prince borne, and lorde ouer all
Howe be it ye toke him in ſmal reuerence
He was ful mēke in ſuffring your offence
Neuertheles ye deuoured him with one aſſēt
As hungry wolues doth the lambe innocent

Where was your pite, o people mercileſſe
Arming your ſelfe with falſhood and treaſon
On my lorde ye haue ſhewed your woodneſſe
Like no men, but beeſtes without reaſon
Your malyce he ſuffred al for the ſeaſon
Your paine wol come, thinke it nat to ſeche
Man without mercy of mercy ſhal lache

Ye traitours & maintainers of madneſſe
Unto your folye I aſcribe al my paine
Ye haue me depriued of lore and gladneſſe
So dealing with my lorde and ſoueraine
Nothing ſhulde I nede thus to complaine
If he had liued in peace and tranquillite
Whom ye haue ſlaine through your iniquite

Farewel your nobleneſſe & lōtime dyd raine
Farewel your worſhip glory and fame
Hereafter to lyue in hate and diſdaine
Maruaile ye not, for your treſpace & blame
Unto ſhame is tourned al your good name
Upon you nowe wol wonder euery nation
As people of moſte vile reputation

Theſe wicked wretches, theſe houndes of hel
As I haue tolde plaine here in this ſentence
Were not content my dere loue thus to quel
But yet they muſt embelile his preſence
As I perceiue by couert violence
They haue him conueied to my diſpleſure
For here is laſte but naked ſepulture

Wherfore of trouth and rightfull iudgement
That their malice againe maye be acquited
After my verdite and auiſement
Of falſe murdre they ſhal be endited
Of theft alſo, whiche ſhal not be reſpited
And in al haſte they ſhall be hanged & drawe
I wol my ſelfe plede this cauſe in the lawe

Alas yf I with trewe attendaunce

Had styl abidden with my lordes corse
And kept it stil with trewe perseueraunce
Than had nat befal this woful deuorse
But as for my paine welcome and no force
This shal be my songe where so euer I go
Departing is grounde of al my wo

I se right wel now in my paines smerte
There is no wounde of so greuous dolour
As is the wounde of my careful herte
Sithe I haue lost thus my paramour
Al swetnesse is tourned in to sour
Wirthe to my herte nothing may conuey
But he that beareth therof bothe locke & key

The ioye excellent of blissed paradise
Maye me alas in no wise comforte
Songe of angel nothing may me suffise
As in min hert nowe to make disporte
Al I refuse, but that I might resorte
Unto my loue, the wel of goodlyheed
For whose longing I trowe I shal be deed

Of painful labour and tourment corporal
I make therof none exception
Paines of hel I wol passe ouer al
My loue to finde in myne affection
So great to him is my delectacion
A thousande times martred wolde I be
His blessed body ones if I might se

About this worlde so large in all compace
I shal not spare to renne my life during
My fete also shal not rest in one place
Tyl of my loue I may here some tiding
For whose absence my hãdes nowe I wring
To thinke on him, cease shal neuer my minde
O gentil Jesu where shal I the finde

Jerusalem I wol serche place fro place
Sion, the vale of Josaphath also
And if I finde him not in al this space
By mount Oliuet to Bethany wol I go
These waies wol I wander and many mo
Nazareth, Bethleem, Mountana, Jude
No trauaile shal me paine him for to se

His blissed face if I might se and finde
Serche I wolde euery coste and countrey
The fardest parte of Egipt or hote Ind
Sulde be to me but a litel iourney
Howe is he thus gone or taken away
If I knewe the ful trouth and certente
Yet from this care released might I be

In to wildernesse I thinke best to go
Sithe I can no more tidinges of him here
There may I my lyfe lede to and fro
There may I dwel, and to no man apere
To towne ne village woll I come nere
Alone in woodes, in rockes, & in caues depe
I may at mine owne will both waile & wepe

Myne eyen twaine withouten variaunce
Shal neuer cease, I promise faithfully
There to wepe with great aboundaunce
Bytter teares renning incessauntly
The whiche teares medled ful petously
With the very blode euer shal renne also
Expressing in mine hert the greuous wo

Worldely fode and sustenaunce I desire none
Soche liuing as I finde, soche wol I take
Rootes that growen on the graggy stone
Shal me suffise with water of the lake
Than thus may I say for my lordes sake
Fuerunt mihi lachrime mee
In deserto panes, die ac nocte

My body to clothe it maketh no force
A mourning mantel shalbe sufficient
The greuous woundes of his pitous corse
Shal be to me a ful royal garnement
He departed thus I am best content
His crosse with nailes and scourges withal
Shal be my thought and paine special

Thus wol I liue, as I haue here tolde
If I may any longe time endure
But I fere death is ouer me so bolde
That of my purpose I can not be sure
My paines encrease with out measure
For of longe lyfe who can lay any reason
Al thing is mortal and hath but a season

I sigh ful sore, and it is ferre fet
Myne hert I fele nowe bledeth inwardly
The blody teares I may in no wise let
Sithe of my paine I finde no remedye
I thanke God of al if I nowe dye
His will performed I holde me content
My soule let him that hath it me lent

For lenger to endure it is intollerable
My woful herte is inflamed so huge
That no sorow to myne is comparable
Sithe of my minde I finde no refuge
Yet I him require as rightful iuge
To deuoide fro me the inwarde sorowe
Lest I liue not to the nexte morowe

within

Within mine hert is impressed ful sore
His royal forme, his shappe, his semelines
His porte, his chere, his goodnes euermore
His noble persone with al gentilnes
He is the welle of al parfitnes
The very redemer of al mankinde
Him loue I best with herte, soule and minde

In his absence my paines ful bitter be
Right wel I may it fele nowe inwardely
No wonder is though they hurte or sleeme
They cause me to crie so rufully
Myne herte oppressed is so wonderfully
Onely for him, which so is bright of blee
Alas I trowe I shal him neuer se

My ioye is translate ful farre in exile
My myrthe is chaunged in to paynes colde
My lyfe I thinke endureth but a while
Anguishe and paine is that I beholde
Wherfore my handes thus I wringe & folde
In to this graue I loke, I cal, I pray
Death remaineth, and life is borne away

Now must I walke and wander here & there
God wot to what partes I shal me dresse
With quaking hert wepinge many a tere
To seke out my loue and al my swetnes
I wolde he wyst what mortal heuines
About min herte reneweth more and more
Than wolde he nat kepe pite longe in store

Without him I may not longe endure
His loue so sore worketh within my brest
And euer I wepe before this sepulture
Sighing ful sore, as mine herte shulde brest
During my lyfe I shal obtaine no rest
But mourne and wepe, where that euer I go
Making complaint of al my mortal wo

Fast I crie, but there is no audience
My cōming hider was him for to please
My soule opprest is here with his absence
Alas he list not to set mine herte in ease
Wherfore to paine my selfe withal disease
I shal not spare tyl he take me to grace
Or els I shal sterue here in this place

Ones if I might with him speake
It were al my ioy, with parfite plesaunce
So that I might to him myne herte breke
I shulde anone deuoide al my greuaunce
For he is the blisse of verie recreaunce
But now alas, I can nothing do so
For in stede of ioy naught haue I but wo

His noble corse within min hertes rote
Depe is graued, whiche shal neuer slake
Nowe is he gone to what place I ne wote
I mourne, I wepe, and al is for his sake
Sith he is paste, here auowe I make
With hertely promise, & therto I me binde
Neuer to cease til I may him finde

Unto his mother I thinke for to go
Of her haply some comforte may I take
But one thinge yet me feareth and no mo
Yf I any mencion of him make
Of my wordes she wolde trimble and quake
And who coude her blame, she hauīg but one
The sōne borne away, the mother wol mone

Sorowes many hath she suffred trewly
Sith that she first conceiued him and bare
And seuen thinges there be most specially
That drowneth her hert in sorowe and care
Yet lo, in no wise may they compare
With this one now, the whiche if she knew
She wolde her paines euerichone renewe

Great was her sorowe by mennes saiyng
Whan in the temple Simeon Iustus
Shewing to her, these wordes prophesiyng
Tuam animam pertansibit gladius
Also whan Herode that tyraunt furious
Her childe pursued in euery place
For his life went neithet mercy ne grace

She mourned whan she knewe him gone
Full longe she sought or she him founde ayen
Whan he went to death his crosse him vpon
It was to her sight a rewful paine
Whan he hōg therō, betwene theues twaine
And the speare vnto his herte thrust right
She swouned, & to the grounde there pight

Whā deed and blody in her lappe lay
His blissed body, bothe handes & fete al tore
She cried out and said, now wela way
Thus araide was neuer man before
Whan hast was made his body to be bore
Unto sepulture here to remaine
Unnethes for wo she coude her sustaine

The sorowes seuen, like swerdes euery one
His mothers herte wosided fro syde to syde
But if she knewe her sonne thus gone
Out of this worlde she shuld with death ride
For care she coude no lenger here abide
Hauing no more ioy nor consolacioun
Than I here standing in this stacioun

The lamentacion of.

Wherfore her to se I dare nat presume
Fro her presence I wol my selfe refraine
Yet had I leuer to dye and consume
Thā his mother shulde haue any more paine
Neuertheles her sonne I wolde se ful faine
His presence was very ioye and swetnes
His absence is but sorowe and heuinesse

There is no more, sith I may him nat mete
Whom I desire aboue al other thing
Nede I must take the sour with the swete
For of his noble corse I here notiding
Ful ofte I crie, and my handes wring
Myne herte alas relenteth al in paine
Whiche wol brast bothe senewe and vaine

Alas howe vnhappy was this woful hour
Wherin is thus mispended my seruice
For min entent and ebe my true labour
To none effecte may come in any wise
Alas I thinke if he do me dispise
And list not to take my simple obseruaunce
There is no more, but death is my finaunce

I haue him called, Sed non respondet mihi
Wherfore my mirth is tourned to mourning
O dere lord Quid mali feci tibi
That me to cōforte I finde no erthely thing
Alas, haue compassion of my crying
Yf fro me, Faciem tuam abscondis
There is no more, but Consumere me vis

Within myne hert is grounded thy figure
That al this worldes horrible tourment
May it not aswage, it is so without measure
It is so brenning, it is so feruent
Remember lorde I haue ben diligent
Euer the to please onely and no mo
Myne herte is with the where so euer I go

Therfore my dere darling, Trahe me post te
And lette me not stande thus desolate
Quia non est, qui consoletur me
Myne herte for the is disconsolate
My paines also nothing me moderate
Howe if it list the to speake with me a lyue
Come in hast, for my herte a sonder will riue

To the I profer lo my poore seruice
Thee for to please after mine owne entent
I offre here, as in deuout sacrifice
My bore replete with precious oyntment
Myne eyen twayne, weping sufficient
Myne herte with anguishe fulfilled is alas
My soule ebe redy for loue aboute to pas

Naught els haue I the to please or pay
For if min harte were golde or precious stone
It shulde be thine without any delay
With hertely chere thou shulde haue it anone
Why suffrest thou me than stande alone
Thou hast I trowe my weping in disdaine
Or els thou knowest nat what is my paine

If thou withdrawe thy noble daliaunce
For ought that euer I displeased the
Thou knowest right wel it is but ignoraūce
And of no knowlege for certainte
If I haue offended lorde forgiue it me
Gladde I am for to make ful repentaunce
Of all thing that hath ben to thy greuaunce

Myne herte alas swelleth within my brest
So sore oppressed with anguishe & with payne
That al to peces forsothe it wol brest
But if I se thy blysled corse againe
For lyke ne death I can nat me refraine
If thou make delay thou maist be sure
Myne hert wol lepe in to this sepulture

Alas my lorde, whi farest thou thus with me
My tribulacion yet haue in minde
Where is thy mercy? where is thy pite?
Whiche euer I trusted in the to finde
Sōtime thou were to me both good & kinde
Lette it please the my prayer to accept
Whiche with teares I haue there bewept

On me thou oughtest to haue very routh
Sith for the is al this mourning
For sith I to the yplighted firste my trouthe
I neuer varied with discording
That knowest thou best my owne darling
Why constrainest thou me thus to wayle?
My wo forsothe can the nothing auaile

I haue endured without variaunce
Right as thou knowest, thy louer iust & trew
With hert & thought aye, at thyn ordinaunce
Lyke to the saphire alwaye in one hewe
I neuer chaunged the for no newe
Why withdrawest thou my presence
Sith al my thought is for thine absence

With hert intier, swete Lorde I crie to the
Encline thine eares to my peticion
And come, Velociter exaudi me
Remembre mine hertes disposicioun
It may not endure in this condicioun
Therfore out of these paines, Libera me
And where thou arte, Pone me iuxta te

Let me beholde, O Jesu thy blissed face
Thy faire glorious angelike visage
Bowe thine eares to my complaint, alas
For to conuey me out of this rage
Alas my lorde, take fro me this dommage
And to my desire for mercy condiscende
For non but thou, may my greuaūce amende

Nowe yet good lorde, I the beseech and pray
As thou raised my brother Lazarous
From death to life the fourth day
Came ayen in body and soule precious
As great a thing maist thou shewe vnto vs
Of thy selfe, by power of thy godheed
As thou dyd of him, lynge in graue deed.

Myne hert is wounded with thy charite
It brenneth, it flameth incessauntly
Come my dere lorde, Ad adiuuandum me
Nowe be not longe my paine to multiplie
Lest in the meane time I departe and die
In thy grace I put bothe hope and confidēce
To do as it pleaseth thy hie magnificence

Floodes of deathe, and tribulacioun
In to my soule I fele entred ful depe
Alas that here is no consolacioun
Euer I waile, euer I mourne and wepe
And sorow hath wounded myn hert ful depe
O dere loue, no maruaile though I die
Sagite tue infixe sunt mihi

wandringe in this place, as in wildernesse
No comforte haue I ne yet assuraunce
Desolate of ioye, replete with faintnesse
No answere receiuing of mine enquiraunce
Myne herte also greued with displesaunce
Wherfore I may saye, O deus deus
Non est dolor sicut dolor meus

Myne hert expresseth. Quod dilexi multum
I may not endure though I wolde faine
For now Solum supersit sepulchrum
I know it right wel by my huge paine
Thus for loue I may not life sustaine
But o God, I muse what ayleth the
Quod sic repente precipitas me

Alas, I se it wil none otherwise be
Nowe must I take my leaue for euermore
This bitter paine hath almost discomfite me
My loues corse I can in no wise restore
Alas to this wo that euer I was bore
Here at this stombe nowe must I die & starue
Death is aboute my hert for to carue

My testament I wol begin to make
To God the father, my soule I commende
To Jesu my loue, that died for my sake
My herte and al bothe I gyue and sende
In whose loue my lyfe maketh ende
My body also to this monument
I here bequeth, bothe boxe and oyntmēt

Of al my willes, lo nowe I make the last
Right in this place within this sepulture
I wol be buried whan I am deed and past
And vpō my graue I wol haue this scripture
Here within resteth a goostly creature
Christes true louer Mary Magdalaine
Whose hert for loue, brake in peces twaine

ye vertuous women, tender of nature
Ful of pite and of compassion
Reforte I pray you vnto my sepulture
To singe my dirige with great deuocion
Shewe your charite in this condicion
Sing with pite and let your hertes wepe
Remembring I am deed am layed to slepe

Than whan ye begin to parte me fro
And ended haue your mourning obseruaūce
Remembre where so euer that ye go
Alway to serche and make due enqueraunce
After my loue, mine hertes sustenaunce
In euery towne and in euery village
If ye may here of this noble ymage

And if it happe by any grace at lasse
That ye my trew loue finde in any cost
Say that his Magdaleine is deed and passe
For his pure loue hath yelded vp the goost
Say that of al thing I loued him most
And that I might not this death eschewe
My paines so sore dyd euer renewe

And in token of loue perpetual
Whan I am buried in this place present
Take out myne hert, the very rote and al
And close it within this boxe of oyntment
To my dere loue make therof a present
Kneling downe with wordes lamentable
Do your message, speake faire and tretable

Say that to him my selfe I commende
A thousande times with herte so fre
This pore token say to him I sende
Pleaseth his goodnesse to take it in gre
It is his owne of right, it is his fee
Whiche he asked, whan he said longe before
Gyue me thy hert, and I desire no more

A due my lorde, my loue for faire of face
A due my turtle doue so freshe of hue
A due my mirthe, a due al my solace
A due alas, my sauiour lorde Iesu
A due the gentellest that euer I knewe
A due my most excellent paramour
Fairer than rose, sweter than lylly flour

A due my hope of al pleasure eternal
My lyfe, my welth, and my prosperite
Mine herte of golde, my peerle oriental
Myne adamant of parfite charite
My cheefe refuge and my felycite
My comforte, and al my recreacioun
Fare wel my parpetual saluacioun

Farewel mine Emperour Celestial
Most beautiful prince of al mankinde
A due my lord, of hert moste lyberal
Farwel my swetest, dothe soule and minde
So louing a spouse shall I neuer finde
A due my soueraine, and very gentilman
Farewel dere herte, as herely as I can

Thy wordes eloquent flowinge in swetnesse
Shal no more alas, my minde recomforte
Wherfore my life must ende in bitternesse
For in this worlde shal I neuer resorte
To the, whiche was mine heuenly disporte
I se alas it wol none other be
Nowe farewel the grounde of al dignite

A due the fairest that euer was bore
Alas I may nat se your blessed face
Nowe welaway that I shal se no more
Thy blessed visage, so replete with grace
Wherin is printed my parfite solace
A due mine hertes roote and al for euer
Nowe farewel, I must from the disceuer

My soule for anguishe is nowe ful thrusty
I faint right sore for heuinesse
My lorde, my spouse: Cur me dereliquisti?
Sith I for the suffre al this distresse
What causeth the to seme thus merciless
Sith it the pleseth of me to make an ende
(In manus tuas) my spirite I commende.

Finis.

The remedie

of Loue.

Eyng the manfolde inconuenience
Falling by vnbridled prosperite
Whiche is not tempred with moral prudẽce
Nothinge more welthie than youthes frelte
Moued I am, bothe of right and equite
To youthes wele somwhat to write
Wherby he may him selfe safecondite

First I note, as thing moste noyous
Vnto youthe a greuous malady
Amonge vs called loue encombrous
Veryng yonge people straungely
Ofte by force causeth hem to dye
Age is ebe turmented by loue
Bineth the girdle, and not aboue

Wherfore this werke, whiche is right labo-
For age me nede nat in honde to take (rous
To youthe me oweth to be obsequious
Nowe I begin thus to worke for his sake
Whiche may the feruence of loue aslake
To the louer, as a mitigatiue
To him that is none a preseruatiue

That mighty lorde whiche me gouerneth
youthe I meane, measure if I pace
In euery mater whiche him concerneth
First as is behoueful, I wol aske grace
And forthwithal in this same place
Er I begin, I wol knele and saye
These fewe wordes, and him of helpe praye

Flouring youth, whiche hasse auauntage
In strength of body in luste and beaute
Also a precelling hasse aboue age
In many a singuler commodite
Howe be it one thing he hath beyonde the
To thy most profite and greatest auaile
Whiche shuld the cõduit, I mean sad coũsaile

And yet good lorde, of a presumption
I nil depraue thy might and deite
I lyue but vnder thy protection
I am thy subiecte, I weare thy lyuerie
For thou arte grounde of my prosperite
And freshest floure of al my garlande

My

My singuler aide, as I well vnderstande.

But as he that oweth his lorde best seruice
And entire faithe, his honour to supporte
Right so I speake, and in none other wise
I knowlege my self one of the least sorte
Of thy seruauntes, to our elders comforte
Drawe sadde counsaile to thee of thou liste
Thee and thy power, who maie then resiste.

Fie on age, vnder wordes fewe
And his erronious opinion
What speakest of him, whiche saieth moste vn-
All youth to be of ill disposicion (true
Dampneth vs all without excepcion
And for a colerable auauntage
He saieth in hym resteth counsaill sage.

Well maie sadde counsaile in him rest
But yet his deedes been ferre therefro
He maie saie with our pariche prest
Doe as I saie, and not as I do
For I my self knowe one or two
Well striken in age, for neighbourhedde
Woll to their neighbours wiues bedde.

He will in presence of the yong man
Her clippe and kisse, ye and doune laie
To bleare his eye, thus he saieth than
O suffre yet olde Morell to plaie
Now haue I doen that I can or maie
Thus he saieth her husbande to queme
That he nor no man should not misdeme.

In worde nor deede, nedeth him not be coie
It is impossible that he doe amisse
If the yong man speake, anon he saieth boie
To rebuke age, besemeth thee not iwis
Thus his olde face aye his warrant is
All is in hym, sleight and subtiltee
And ferre from reason I tell thee.

And shortly age is not aboue me
Age is impotent, and of no resistence
Age vnweldie maie not fight nor flee
What were age without my defence
Sad counsaile saiest giueth hym assistence
Reason is freshest where that I ame
Wherefore in thy saiyng thou art to blame.

Sith reason to me is rather accompanied
Then vnto age, whiche is the opinion
Of euery wise man not to be denied
And sith sad counsaile procedeth of reason
Sad counsaile in me hath his chief mansion
This is no naie, but what is the ende
Of this thy suasion what doest entende.

Age to compare vnto thyne excellence
I will presume hym so to dignifie
Ye be not egall, how be it experience
Hym auauntageth, for the moste certainly
Hym teacheth what thing to hym is cõtrary
And ofte to fore see it, and warely eschewe
Whiche thou neuer assaidest yet nor knewe.

Experience maketh a man moste certain
Of any thing hearthly, and of necessitee
Sad counsaile requireth certaintie plain
So ferre to moue thus whereto nede we
But to my purpose, as thou commaundest me
Shortly mine entent is thus, and none other
Under thy lience to counsaile my brother.

How shouldest giue any counsaile so yong
Lacking experience vnto thyne own speache
I repose me, I wote well as for thy tong
Will serue thee right wel, but thã for to teach
I doubte me leste that thy wit woll not reach
Youth & experience thou saist be not conuers
How shouldest then teache well vnexpert.

Scripture witnesseth ỳ God will oft hide
Fro the hie witted man, & shewe it to the child
To hym I meane that of his owne witte
Presumeth not, but is debonaire and milde
By counsaile I entend vertue for to bilde
Whiche of myne elders part haue I borowed
And part of experiẽce, which I haue forowed

Well than, if it be as thou letest fare
Shewe forthe thy doctrine be not agaste
I woll thee suppose, looke thou not spare
Maugre age, though he frete or gnaste
To aske age counsaill herein were but waste
Boldely begin, go forthe to the processe
Feare not sith thou art of soothe sureneste.

Graunt mercie lorde sith it thee doeth like
To licence me, now I woll and dare boldly
Assaile my purpose, wt scriptures autentike
My werke woll I ground, vnderset, & forteste
Aspire my beginnyng, O thou woode furie
Alecto with thy susters, and in especiall
To the mother of ielousie Iuno I call.

Explicit Prologus.

THis werke who so shall se
or rede
Of any incongruitie doe
me not impeche
Ordinatelie behoueth me
first to procede
In deduccion thereof, in
maner as the leche
His pacientes sickines oweth first for to seche
The which knowen, medicin he should aplie
And shortly as he can, then shape a remedie.

Right so by counsail, willing the to exhort
O yong man prosperous, which doth abounde
In thy floures of luste belongeth on thee sort
Be first to consider what is roote and ground
Of thy mischief, whiche is plainlie found
Woman farced with fraude and disceipt
To thy confusion moste allective baite.

Flie the mis woman, lest she thee disceiue
Thus saith Salomō, which tauȝt was fullie
The falshed of women in his daies to cōceine
The lips of a strumpet been sweter thā honie
Her throte he saieth soupled w̄ oile of flaterie
How be it the ende and effecte of all
Bitter is then any wormwode or gall.

Flie the mis woman, louyng thy life
Ware the straungers blande eloquence
Straunge I call her that is not thy wife
Of her beautie haue no concupiscence
Her countenaunce, pretendyng beneuolence
Beware her signes and iye so amiable
Holde it for ferme, thei been disceiuable.

Lo an ensample what women be
In their signes and countenaunce shortlie
I woll shewe thee how louers three
Loued one woman right entirelie
Eche of them knewe others maladie
Wherefore was all their daily labour
Who coud approche next in her fauour.

At sondrie seasons, as fortune requireth
Seuerallie thei came to see her welfare
But ones it happened, loue them so fireth
To see their Ladie thei all would not spare
Of others comyng none of them were ware
Till all thei mette, where as thei in place
Of her Ladie sawe the desired face.

To supper set, full smallie thei eate
Full sober and demure in countenaunce
For there taried none of hem for any meate
But on his Ladie to giue attendaunce
And in secrete wise some signifiaunce
Of loue to haue, whiche parceiuyng she
Fetelie executed thus her propertee.

In due season, as she alwaie aspied
Euery thyng to execute conuenientlie
Her one louer first frendlie she iyed
The seconde she offred the cuppe curtesie
The thirde she gaue token secretlie
Underneth the borde she trade on his foote
Throughy his entrailes tikled the hart roote.

By your leaue, might I here aske a questiō
Of you my maisters that sewe loues trace
To you likely belongeth the solucion
Whiche of these three stood now in grace
Clerely to answere ye would aske long space
The matter is doubtfull and opinable
To a certain you I woll my self enable.

Of the forsaied three my self was one
No man can answere it better then I
Hartely of vs biloued was there none
But wattes packe we bare all by and by
Whiche at last I my self gan aspie
And time as me thought, then I left ỹ daunce
O thoughtfull harte, great is thy greuaunce

Hence fro me hence, that me for to endite
Halpe aie here afore, o ye muses nine
Whilom ye were wont to be mine aide & light
My penne to direct, my brain to illumine
No lenger alas maie I sewe your doctrine
The freshe lustie meters, that I wont to make
Haue been here afore, I vtterlie forsake.

Come hither thou Hermes, & ye furies all
Which ser been vnder vs, nigh the nether pole
Where Pluto reigneth, o kyng infernall
Sende out thine arpies, send anguishe & dole
Miserie and wo, leaue ye me not sole
Of right be present must pain & eke turment
The pale death besemeth not to be absent.

To me now I call all this lothsome sort
My paines encrease, my sorowes to augmēt
For worthie I am to be bare of all comfort
Thus sith I haue consumed and mispent
Not onely my daies, but my fiuefolde talent
That my lorde cōmitted me, I cā not recōpēce
I maie not to derely abye my negligence.

By the path of penaunce yet woll I reuert
To the well of grace, mercie there to fetche

Dispiself

Despisest not God the meke contrite harte
Of the cocke crowe, alas ẏ I would not retche
And yet it is not late in the seconde wetche
Mercie shall I purchace by incessaunt criyng
The mercies of our lorde euer shall I syng.

But well maiest thou waile wicked womā
That thou shuldest disceiue thus any innocēt
And in recompence of my synne, so as I can
To al men wol I make & leue this monumēt
In shewing part of thy falshed is myne entēt
For all were to moche, I cannot well I wote
The cause sheweth plainly he ẏ thus wrote.

If al the yearth wer parchment scribable
Spedie for the hande, and all maner wood
Wer hewed and proporcioned to pennes able
All water ynke, in damme or in flood
Euery man being a parfite Scribe and good
The cursednesse yet and desceipt of women
Coud not be shewed by the meane of penne.

I flie all odious resemblaunces
The Deuils bronde call women I might
Whereby man is encensed to mischaunces
Or a stinkyng rose that faire is in sight
Or dedly empoyson, like the fuger white
Whiche by his swetnesse causeth man to tast
and sodainly sleeth & bringeth him to his last

It is not my maner to vse soche language
But this my doctrine, as I maie lawfullie
I woll holly grounde with aucthoritie sage
Willing bothe wisedome, and vertue edefie
Wine and women into apostasie
Cause wisemen to fall, what is that to saie
Of wisedome cause them to forget the waie.

Wherefore the wiseman doeth thee aduise
In whose wordes can be founde no leasyng
With the straunger to sit in no wise
Whiche is not thy wife, fall not in clippyng
With her, but beware eke of her kissyng
Kepe with her in wine no altercacion
Lest that thyne harte fall by inclinacion.

Maie a man thinkest hide and safe laie
Fire in his bosome, without empairement
And brēning of his clothes, or whider he may
Walke on hotte coles, his feete not brente
As who saieth naie, and whereby is mente
This foresaied prouerbe and similitude
But that thou ridde thee plainly to denude.

From the flatterers forgettyng her gide
The gide of her youth, I meane shamfastnes
Whiche should cause her maidenhed to abide
Her Goddes beheste eke she full rechelesse
Not retching, committeth it to forgetfulnes
Neither God ne shame in her hauyng place
Nedes must soche a woman lacke grace.

And all that neigh her in waie of sin
To tourne of grace shall lacke the influence
The pathes of life no more to come in
Wherefore first frende thee with Sapience
Remembring God, and after with Prudence
To thyne owne weale that thei thee kepe
Unto thyne harte, least her wordes crepe.

In his booke where I take my moste ground
And in his prouerbes sage Salomon
Telleth a tale, whiche is plainly found
In the fiueth chapiter, wheder in deede don
Or mekely feined to our instruccion
Let clerkes determine, but this am I sure
Moche like thyng I haue had in vre.

At my windowe saieth he I looked out
Faire yong people, where I sawe many
Emong hem all, as I looked about
To a yong man fortuned I lent myne iye
Estraunged from his minde it was likely
By the streate at a corner, nigh his own hous
He went about with iye right curious.

When that the daie his light gan withdrawe
And the night approched in the twinlight
How a woman came and met hym I sawe
Talking with him vnder shade of the night
Now blessed be God (ẏ she) of his might
Whiche hath fulfilled myne hartes desire
Aslaked my paines, whiche were hote as fire.

And yet myne aucthour, as it is skill
To folowe, I must tell her araiment
She was full nice, soules like to spill
As nice in countenaunce yet as in garmente
For ianglyng she was of rest impaciente
Wandryng still in no place she stode
But restlesse now, and now out she yode.

Now in the hous, now in the strete
Now at a corner she standeth in awaite
Incessauntly busie her praie for to gete
To bryng to the lure whom she doeth laite
Now where I left, vnto my matter straite
I woll tourne again, how she hym met
Swetely kissed, and frendly hym grette.

With wordes of curtesie many and diuerse
Right as in part I haue before tolde
Now as I can I purpose to reherse
How the flattering faied with vilage bolde
I haue made bowes and offringes manifolde
For thy sake, O myne harte, O my loue dere
This daie I thanke God all perfourmed were.

Therefore I came out, & made thus affarte
Verie desirous your welfare to se
Now I haue seen you, pleased is myne harte
In faithe shall none haue my loue but ye
As true as I am to you be to me
I praie you hartely dere harte come home
No man should be to me so welcome.

And in good faithe, the sothe for to saie
Your comyng to me ran in my thought
Harke in your eare, my bedde freshe and gaie
I haue behanged with tapettes new bought
From Egipte, and frō far countries brought
Steined with many a lustie freshe hue
Excedyng golde or Jasper in value.

My chāber is strowed with Wirre & insence
With sote sauoring Aloes, & with sinamome
Breathyng an Aromatike redolence
Surmountyng Olibane, in any mans dome
Ye shall bitwene my breastes rest if ye come
Let vs haue our desired halsyng
For we maie safe be till in the mornyng.

Myne husband is not at home, he is went
Forthe in his iourney, a farre waie hence
A bagge with money he hath with hym hent
As hym thought nedefull for his expence
Unto my worde giue faithe and credence
Now is the Moone yong, and of light dulle
Ere he come home it woll be at the fulle

Thus craftely hath she hym belette
With her lime roddes, panter, and snare
The selie soule caught in her nette
Of her sugred mouthe, alas nothyng ware
Thus is he left graceles and bare
Of helpe, comfort, and ghostlie succour
And furthermore, as saieth myne aucthour.

As a beast ledde to his death doeth pante
This yong man foloweth her in that stounde
And as a wanton Lambe full ignorante
How he is puiled and drawen to be bounde
Unto the tyme he hath his deathes wounde
And like a birde that hasteth to the grin
Not knowyng the perill of his life therein.

Now gentle sonne saith Salomon take hede
My wordes in thy breast kepe and make faste
Let her not thy mynde in her waies mislede
Be not deceiued, lese not thy taste
Many hath she wounded, many doune caste
Many strong by her hath loste their breath
Her waies, waies of hell ledyng to death.

And in this little naracion precidente
The womannes manifolde gilt I attende
The yong man alas how she hath shent
Disceiued her husbande, her own next frend
In these bothe her God she doeth offende
To breake her spousail, to her is of no weight
Furdermore to shew womans craft & sleight.

A woman at her doore sate on a stall
To see folke passe by streates of the citee
With ye and countenaunce eke she gan call
If there be any pretie one, come nere to me
Come hither ye pigges nye, ye little babe
At last she saied to a yong man hartlesse
Of her disceipt vnware and defencelesse

Woche swetter she saith, & more acceptable
Is drinke when it is stollen priuely
Then when it is taken in forme auowable
Bread hid and gotten iepperdouslie
Must nedes be swete, and semblablie
Venison stolne is saie the swetter
The ferther the narower set the better.

And who this woman saith Salomon sesses
The yong man woteth not who she doth sede
Of the darke depenesse of hell been her gesses
Beware yong man therefore I thee rede
And how be it chiefly for thy good spede
This werke to cōpile, I haue take in charge
I must of pitie my charitie enlarge.

With the selie man whiche is thus begiled
Her husband I mean, I wol wepe and waile
His painfull infortune, whereby reuiled
Causeles he is, neuer to conuaile
Euery man yong and olde woll him assaile
With wordes of occasion, with the loth name
And alas good soule, he nothyng to blame.

But she that could so ill doe and wolde
Hers be the blame for her demerite
And leaue that opprobrous name cokolde
To aproper to hym as in dispite
Ransake yet we would if we might
Of this worde the true ortographie
The very discent and ethimologie.

The

The well and grounde of the first inuenciō
To knowe the ortographie we must deriue
Whiche is coke and cold, in composicion
By reason, as nigh as I can contriue
Then how it is written we knowe beliue
But yet lo, by what reason and grounde
Was it of these twoo wordes compounde.

As of one cause to giue very iudgement
Themilogie let vs first beholde
Eche letter an hole worde doeth represent
As C, put for colde, and O, for olde
K, is for knaue, thus diuers men holde
The first parte of this name we haue founde
Let vs ethimologise the seconde.

As the first finder mente I am sure
C, for calot, for of, we haue O
L, for leude, D, for demeanure
The craft of the enuentour ye maie se lo
How one name signifieth persones two
A colde olde knaue, cokolde himself wenyng
And eke a calot of leude demeanyng.

The seconde cause of thimposicion
Of this foresaied name was ielousie
To be ielouse is greatest occasion
To be cokolde, that men can aspie
And though the passion be very firie
And of continuell feruence and heete
The pacient aye suffreth cold on his feete.

And who that is ielous, and aye in a drede
Is full of Melancolie and gallie ire
His wiues nose if she misse trede
He woll cutte of, ye and conspire
His death who that woll her desire
Whiche she perceiuyng brasteth his gall
And anone his greate wodenesse doeth fall.

As sone as she hath knit hym that knot
Now is he tame that was so ramagious
Mekely sitteth he doune and taketh his lot
Laied been now his lokes so furious
And he but late as a cocke batailous
Hote in his quarell, to auenge hym bolde
Now is he called bothe coke and colde.

This saiyng, to all curtesie dissonant
Whiche semeth that it of malice grewe
In this rude treatise I woll not plant
As parcell thereof, but onely to shewe
The opinion of the talcatife shrewe
Whiche in ill saiyng is euer merie
No man as I thereof so werie.

But I as parcell of this my booke
Woll graffe in some sadde counsaill wherby
The wedded man, if he daigne to looke
In it, the better shall mowe hym gie
And prouide for his saied infortunie
Whiche as I haue saied, with him complaine
I woll, as partener of his greate paine.

As moste expedient to his weale
I would all ielousie were abiecte
If he be ielous, that he it conceale
And in his labour be circumspecte
To knowe her waies, if thei seme suspecte
And not for to breake, for one worde broken
She woll not misse but she woll be wroken

Forbid her not, that thou noldest haue don
For looke what thyng she is forbod
To that of all thynges she is moste prone
Namely if it be ill and no good
Till it be executed she is nigh wood
Soche is woman, and soche is her feate
Her craft by craft, labour to defeate.

If thou hereafter, now a single man
Shouldest be ielous if thou haddest a wife
Wedde not but if thou can trust woman
For els shouldest lede a carefull life
That thou moste lothest should be full rife
Yet I nill gainsaie Matrimonie
But Melius est nubere quam vri.

That is to saie, better is in Wedlocke
A wife to take, as the churche doeth kenne
Then to been vnder the fleshes yoke
In fleshlie lust alwaie for to brenne
But as I saied, for all ielous menne
So thei liue chaste, I holde it lasse ill
That thei wedde not, than them self spill

The single man whiche is yet to wedde
And not the wedded man, thus I rede
To warne hym now he is to farre spedde
It is to late hym for to forbedde
But let hym take as for his owne nede
Soche counsaile as is hym before tolde
These wordes folowyng eke she beholde.

Thy water to kepe the wiseman doeth teache
That thou in no wise let it haue issue
At a narowe rifte, waie it woll seche
And semblablie the woman vntrue
To giue her frewalke in all wise eschue
If she at large, not at thine hande walke
She woll thee shame, thou shalt it not balke.

Wedded

wedded or single, thus saith the wiseman
Her that bothe daie and night euermore
Lithe in thy bosome, wife or yet lemman
Loue not to hote, least thou repent sore
Lest she thee bryng into some ill lore
Thy wife not to loue yet I will support
But that thou dote not, thus I thee exhort.

Lo if thou loue her, loue ebe thine honestie
Be she not idell, for what woll betide
If she sit idle, of very necessitie
Her minde woll searche ferre and ebe wide
Namelie if she be not accompanide
How accompanied, not with yong men
But with maidens I meane or women.

Maiden seruauntes be right conuenient
In house to helpe to doe her seruice
In whom she maie vse her commaundement
In the season at her owne deuice
To teache hem good, yeue her thine aduice
To make them huswiues, thus businesse
Maie yet refrain her from idlenesse.

But bide not her that thou wolt haue do
Of thine entent that might be lettyng
But craftely encourage her therto
By other meanes, as by commendyng
And not to moche, but duely mengyng
Bothe praise and blame, and in thy reason
First praise wisely the place and season.

Of faithfull will, and harte full tender
One thing I call into remembraunce
Again, whiche though my wit be slender
After my power and sufficiaunce
I purpose to make a purueiaunce
Sith women of nature been chaungeable
Freale not ware allo disceiuable.

Be it that thy wife be excellently good
That none be better of disposicion
In procesle of time she might turne her mode
By some misse liuers instigacion
Diuers men to thilke occupacion
Aplien daily, mynde and eke harte
From her goodnesse women to peruarte.

If thou aspie any suspect person
Draw to thy wife, beware in all wise
To hym nor her of thy suspeccion
Breake not one worde, though thin harte a-
Kindle no fire, no smoke woll arise (grise
Though he be of a corrupt entent
She perauenture is not of assent.

Explicit.

The complaint

of Mars and Venas.

Ladeth ye louers in the morowe graie
Lo Venus risen emong yon Rowes rede
And floures freshe honour ye this daie
For whē the sonne, vprist, then would thei spredе
But ye louers that lie in any drede
Flieth leste wicked tongues you aspie
Lo yonde the Sonne, the candell of ielousie.

With teares blewe, & with a wounded hart
Taketh your leue, and wt sainct Jhō to borow
Apeseth somwhat of your paines smart
Time cometh eft, ỹ cessen shall your sorow
The glad night is worth an heauie morowe
Sainct Valentine a foule thus beard I sing
Upon thy daie or Sonne gan vp spring.

Yet sang this foule I rede you all awake
And ye that haue not chosen in humble wise
Without repentyng cheseth your make
Yet at the least, renoueleth your seruice
And ye that haue full chosen as I deuise
Confermeth it perpetually to dure
And pacientlie taketh your auenture

And for the worship of this high feaste
Yet woll I in my briddes wise syng
The sentence of the complaint at the leaste
That wofull Mars made at the departyng
Fro freshe Venus in a morowning
When Phebus with his firie torches rede
Ranlaked hath euery louer in his drede.

Whilome the three heauens lorde aboue
As well by heauenliche reuolucion
As by deserte hath wonne Venus his loue
And she hath take hym in subieccion
And as a maistresse taught him his lesson
Commaundyng hym neuer in her seruice
Ne were so bolde no louer to dispise.

For she forbade hym ielousie at all
And crueltie and bosse, and tirannie
She made him at her luste so humble and tal
That when she dained to cast on him her ye
He tooke in pacience to liue or die
And thus she bridleth him in her maner

With

With nothing, but with scornig of her chere

Who reigneth nowe in blisse but Venus
That hath this worthi knight in gouernaunce
Who singeth nowe but Mars ẏ serueth thus
The fayre Venus, causer of plesaunce
He bint him to perpetuel obeissaunce
And she binte her to loue him for euer
But so be that his trespace it disceuer

Thus be they knitte, and reignen as in heuē
By loking most, as it fel on a tide
That by her bothe assent was set a steuene
That Mars shal entre as fast as he may gly-
In to her nexte palays to abyde (de
Walking his course til she had him ytake
And he prayed her to haste her for his sake

Than saide he thus, myne hertes lady swete
Ye knowe wel my myschefe in that place
For sikerly tyl that I with you mete
My lyfe stante there in auenture and grace
But whan I se the beaute of your face
There is no drede of death may do me smerte
For al your luste is ease to mine herte

She hath so great compassion of her knight
That dwelleth in solitude til she come
For it stode so, that ylke time no wight
Counsailed him, ne saide to him welcome
That nigh her wit for sorow was ouercome
Wherfore she spedde as fast in her way
Almoste in one daye as he dyd in tway

The great ioye that was betwixe hem two
Whan they be mette, there maye no tonge tel
There is no more but vnto bedde they go
And thus in ioye and blisse I lette hem dwel
This worthy Mars ẏ is of knighthode wel
The floure of fairnesse happeth in his armes
And Venus kysseth Mars the god of armes

Soiourned hath this Mars, of which I rede
In chambre amydde the palais priuely
A certaine time, til him fela drede
Through Phebus that was comen hastely
Within the palais yates sturdely
With torch in honde, of which ẏ stremes brizt
On Venus chambre, knockeden ful light

The chambre there as laye this freshe quene
Depainted was with white boles grete
And by the light she knew that shon so shene
That Phebus came to bren hem w̄ his hete
This silly Venus ny dreint in teares wete

Enbraseth Mars, and said alas I die
The torch is come, ẏ al this worlde wol wrie

Up sterte Mars, him liste not to slepe
Whan he his lady herde so complaine
But for his nature was not for to wepe
In stede of teares from his eyen twaine
The firie sparcles sprongen out for paine
And hente his hauberke that lay him beside
Flye wold he nought, ne might him self hide

He throweth on his helme of huge weight
And girt him with his swerde, & in his honde
His mighty speare, as he was wont to feight
He shaketh so, that it almost to wonde
Ful heuy was he to walken ouer londe
He may not holde with Venus company
But badde her flye leste Phebus her espy

O woful Mars alas, what maist thou sain
That in the palaies of thy disturbaunce
Arte lefte behinde in paril to be slaine
And yet there to his double thy penaunce
For she that hath thine hert in gouernaunce
Is passed halfe the stremes of thine eyen
That ẏ nere swift, wel maist ẏ wepe & crien

Nowe flyeth Venus in to Ciclinius tour
With voide corse, for feare of Phebus light
Alas and there hath she no socour
For she ne founde ne sey no maner wight
And eke as there she had but litel might
Wherfore her seluen for to hide and saue
Within the gate she fledde in to a caue

Darke was this caue, & smoking as the hel
Nat but two paas within the yate it stode
A naturel day in darke I let her dwel
Now wol I speake of Mars furious & wode
For sorowe he wolde haue seen his hert blod
Sith ẏ he might haue done her no companie
He ne rought not a mite for to die

So feble he wext for hete and for his wo
That nigh he swelt, he might vnneth endure
He passeth but a sterre in dayes two
But neuertheles, for al his heuy armure
He foloweth her that is his liues cure
For whose departing he toke greater yre
Than for al his brenning in the fire

After he walketh softely a paas
Complaining that it pite was to here
He saide, O lady bright Venus alas
That euer so wide a compas is my sphere

The complaint of Mars.

Alas, whan shal I mete you herte dere
This twelue dayes of April I endure
Throughe ielous Phebus this misauenture

Now God helpe sely Uenus alone
But as God wolde it happed for to be
That while ỹ weping Uenus made her mone
Ciclinius riding in his chyuauche
Fro Uenus Ualanus might this palais se
And Uenus he saluet, and maketh chere
And her receiueth as his frende ful dere

Mars dwelleth forth in his aduersite
Complaining euer in her departing
And what his cõplaint was remẽbreth me
And therfore in this lustie morowning
As I best can, I wol it saine and sing
And after that I wol my leaue take
And God yeue euery wight ioy of his make.

¶ The complaint

of Mars.

The order of complaynt requireth skilfully
That if a wight shall plaine pitously
Ther mote be cause wherfore that men plaine
Or men may deme he playneth folyly
And causeles alas that am not I
Wherfore the grõude & cause of all my paine
So as my troubled witte may it attaine
I wol reherse, not for to haue redresse
But to declare my grounde of heuinesse

The first time alas, that I was wrought
And for certaine effectes hider brought
By him that lordeth eche intelligence
I yaue my trewe seruice and my thought
For euermo, how dere I haue it bought
To her that is of so great excellence
That what wight ỹ sheweth first her offence
Whan she is worthe & taketh of him no cure
He may not longe in ioye of loue endure

This is no fained mater that I tel
My lady is the very sours and wel
Of beaute, luste, fredome, and gentilnesse
Of riche array howe dere men it sel
Of al disporte in whiche men frendly dwel
Of loue and play, and of beninge humblesse
Of sowne of instrumentes of al swetnesse
And thereto so wel fortuned and thewed
That throughe ỹ world her goodnes is shewed

what wonder is than though that I be sette
My seruice on soche one that may me knette
To wele or wo, lithe it lithe in her might
Therfore myne herte for euer I to her hette
Ne trewly for my deth shall I not lette
To ben her trewest seruant and her knight
I flatter nat, that may wete euery wight
For this day in her seruice shal I dye
But grace be, I se her neuer with eye

To whom shal I plaine of my distresse
who may me help, who may my hert redresse
Shal I complaine vnto my lady free
Nay certes, for she hath soche heuynesse
For feare and eke for wo, that as I gesse
In litel time it would her bane be
But were she safe, it were no force of me
Alas that euer louers mote endure
For loue so many perilous auenture

For though so be that louers bee as trewe
As any metal that is forged newe
In many a case hem tideth oft sorowe
Somtime her ladies wol nat on hem rewe
Somtime if that ielously it knewe
They might lightly lay her heed to borowe
Somtime enuions folke wtonges horowe
Deprauen hem alas, whom may they please
But he be false, no louer hath his ease

But what auaileth soch a longe sermoun
Of auentures of loue vp and doun
I wol retourne and speaken of my paine
The point is this of my distructioun
My right lady, my saluacioun
Is in affray, and not to whom to plaine
O herte swete, o lady souerayne
For your disease I ought wel swoun & swelt
Though I none other harme ne drede felt

To what fine made the God that sytte so hie
Beneth him loue other companye
And straineth folke to loue maugre her heed
And than her ioye for aught I can espie
He lasteth not the twinkeling of an eye
And some haue neuer ioye til they be deed
What meaneth this, what is this mistiheed
Wherto constraineth he his folke so fast
Thing to desire but it should last

And

And though he made a louer loue a thing
And maketh it seme stedfast and during
Yet putteth he in it sothe misauenture
That rest nis there in his yeuing
And that is wonder that so iuste a king
Dothe sothe hardnesse to his creature
Thus whether loue breke or els dure
Algates he that hath with loue to done
Hath after wo, than chaunged is ỹ Moone

It semeth he hath to louers enmyte
And lyke a fisher, as men may al day se
Baiteth his angle hoke with some plesaunce
Til many a fisshe is wode to that he be
Ceased therwith, and than at erst hath he
Al his desire, and therwith al mischaunce
And though the line breke he hath penaunce
For with that hoke he wounded is so sore
That he his wages hath for euermore

The broche of Thebes was of sothe kinde
So ful of rubyes and of stones of Inde
That euery wight that sette on it an eye
He wende anone to worthe out of his mynde
So sore the beaute would his hert bynde
Til it he had, him thought he must die
And whē that it was his than should he drie
Sothe wo for drede aye while that he it had
That welnigh for the feare he should mad

And whan it was fro his possession
Than had he double wo and passion
That he so faire a iewel hath forgo
But yet this broche, as in conclusion
Was not the cause of his confusion
But he that wrought it enfortuned it so
That euery wight ỹ had it should haue wo
And therfore in the worcher was the vice
And in the coueitour that was so nice

So fareth it by lours, and by me
For though my lady haue so greate beaute
That I was made to, I had gette her grace
She was not cause of mine aduersite
But he that wrought her, as mote I thee
That put sothe a beaute in her face
That made mē coueiten and purchace
Myne owne death him wite I that I die
And mine vnwit that euer I clambe so hie

But to you hardy knightes of renowne
Sithe that ye be of my deuise yowne
Al be I not worthy to so great a name
Yet saine these clerkes I am your patrone
Therfore ye ought haue some compassione
Of my disease, and take it not a game
The proudest of you may be made ful tame
Wherfore I pray you of your gentillesse
That ye complaine for mine heuinesse

And ye my ladyes that ben trew and stable
By way of kinde ye ought to ben able
To haue pite of folke that ben in paine
Nowe haue ye cause to clothe you in sable
Sith that your empres the honorable
Is desolate, wel ought ye to plaine
Nowe shoude your holy teares fal and raine
Alas your honour and your empyre
Nigh deed for drede, ne can her not cheuice

Complaineth ehe ye louers al in fere
For her that with vnfained humble chere
Was euer redy to do you socour
Complaineth her that euer hath be youdere
Complaineth beaute, fredome, and manere
Complaineth her that endeth your labour
Complaineth thilke ensample of al honour
That neuer dyd but gentilnesse
Kytheth therfore in her some kindnesse

¶ The complaint of Venus.

Here nys so high comfort to my plesaunce
Whan that I am in any heuinesse
As for to haue layser of remembraunce
Upon the manhode and the worthynesse
Upon the trouthe, and on the stedfastnes
Of him whose I am al while I maye dure
There ought to blame ne no creature
For euery wight praiseth his gentillesse

In him is boute, wisedome, & gouernaunce
Well more than any mannes witte can gesse
For grace hath wolde so ferforth him auaūce
That of knighthod he his parfite richesse
Honour honoureth him for his noblesse
Therto so wel hath fourmed him nature
That I am his for euer I him ensure
For euery wight praiseth his gentillesse

And nat withstanding all his sufficiaunce
His gentil herte is of so great humblesse
To me in worde, in werke, & in countenaūce

And me to serue is al his besinesse
That I am sette in very sykernesse
Thus ought I blisse wel mine auentur
Sith that him liste me seruen and honour
For euery wight praiseth his gentillesse

Nowe certes loue it is right couenable
That men ful dere abye thy noble thinges
As wake a bedde, and fasten at the table
Weping to laugh & singe in complainynges
And downe to cast visage and lokinges
Often to chaunge visage and countenaunce
Playe in slepinge and dremen at the daunce
Al the reuers of any gladde feling

Jelousy he hanged by a cable
She wolde al knowe through her espiyng
There do the no wight nothing so resonable
That al nis harme in her ymagining
Thus dere abought is loue in yeuing
Whiche ofte he yeueth without ordinaunce
As sorowe ynough, and litel of plesaunce
Al the reuers of any glade feling

A litel tyme his yeft is agreable
But ful accombrous is the vsinge
For subtel jelousy the disceiuable
Ful often tyme causeth disturbinge
Thus ben we euer in drede and suffring
In no certaine, we languishen in penaunce
And haue wel ofte many an harde mischaūce
Al the reuers of any gladde feling

But certes loue, I saye not in suche wise
That for to scape out of your lace I ment
For I so longe haue ben in your seruice
That for to lete of wil I neuer assent
No force though jelousye me tourment
Sufficeth me to se him whan I may
And therfore certes to mine ending day
To loue him best, shal me neuer repent

And certes loue, whan I me wel aduise
Of any estate that man may represent
Thā haue ye made me through your frāchise
Chese the best that euer in erthe went
Nowe loue well hert, & loke thou neuer stent
And lette the jelous putte it in assaye
That for no paine wol I not say naye
To loue him best, shal I neuer repent

Herte to the it ought ynoughe suffice
That loue so highe a grace to you sent
To chose the worthiest in all wise
And most agreable vnto mine entent
Seke no ferther, neither way ne went
Sith ye haue sufficisaunce vnto my paye
Thus wol I ende this cōplaining or this lay
To loue him best, shal I neuer repent.

Lenuoye.

Princes reciueth this cōplainynge in gree
Unto your excellent benignite
Directe after my litel sufficisaunce
For elde, that in my spirite dulleth me
Hath of enditing al the subtelte
Welnigh berafte out of my remembraunce
And eke to me it is a great penaunce
Sith rime in Englishe hath soche scarcite
To folowe worde by worde the curiosite
Of Granson flour, of hem ỳ make in Fraūce.

Explicit.

Here after foloweth the letter of Cupide.

Upide, vnto whose commaundemet
The gentill hinrede of goddes on hie
And people infernall ben obedient
And al mortal folke seruē busely
Of the goddesse sonne Cythera onely
To al tho that to our deite
Ben subiectes, hertely greting sende we

In general we wol that ye knowe
That ladies of honour and of reuerence
And other gentil women hauen sowe
Soche seede of complaint in our audience
Of men that do hem outrage and offence
That it our eares greueth for to here
So pitous is the effecte of this matere

Passing al londes, on the lytel yle
That cleped is Albion, they muste complaine
They say that ther is croppe and rote of gile
So con tho men dissimule and faine
With standing dropes in her eyen twaine
Whan that her hertes feleth no distresse
To blinden women with her doublenesse

Her wordes spoken be so sighyingly
With so pitous chere and countenaunce
That euery wight that meaneth trewly
Demeth they in herte haue soch greuaunce
They say so importable is her penaunce

That

That but her lady lust to shewe hem grace
They right anone muste sterue in the place

My lady myne they say, I you ensure
As dothe me grace, and I shal euer be
While ye that my lyfe may last and endure
To you as humble and lowe in eche degre
As possible, is and kepe al thinges in as secre
Right as your selfe liste that I do
And els myne herte mote brast in two

Ful harde it is to knowe a mannes herte
For outwarde may no man the trouth deme
Whan word out of mouth may none sterte
But it by reson semed euery wight to queme
So it is said of herte as it would seme
O faithful woman ful of innocence
Thou art disceiued by false apparence

By processe moueth ofte womans pite
Wening al thing were as these men sey
They graunt hem grace of her benignite
For that men should not for her sake dey
And with good hert sette hem in the wey
Of blissful loue kepe it if they conne
And thus other while women bethe ywonne

And whan this man the pan hath by ꝑ stele
And fully is in his possession
With that women kepeth he no more to dele
After yt he may finde in the toun
Any women his blinde affection
Unto bestowe, yuel mote he preue
A man for al his othes is harde to beleue

And for that euery false man hath a make
As vnto euery wight is light to know
Whan this traitour this womā hath forsake
He fast spedeth him vnto his felowe
Til he be there his herte is on a lowe
His false disceite may him not suffise
But of his trayson telleth al the wise

In this a faire auaunt, is this honour
A man him selfe accuse thus and diffame
Is it good to confesse him selfe a traitour
And bring a woman to sclaunderous name
And tel howe he her body hath do shame
No worshippe may he thus to him conquer
But great disclaunder vnto him and her

To her nay, yet was it no repreue
For al for vertue was that she wrought
But he that brewed hath al this mischefe
That spake so faire, & falsely inwarde thought
His be the sclaunder, as it by reson ought
And vnto her thanke perpetuell
That in sothe a nede helpe can so wel

Although through mens sleght and subtilte
A sely simple and innocent woman
Betraied is, no wonder is the the cite
Of Troye, as the storie tel can
Betrayed was through the disceite of man
And set on fyre, and al downe ouerthrowne
And finally destroied as men knowe

Betray nat men cites great and kinges
What wight is it that can shape remedy
Ayenst these falsely purposed thinges
Who can the crafte sothe crafftes espy
But man, whose witte is euer redy taply
To thing that sowning in to falsehede
Women bethe ware of false men I rede

And farthermore haue these men in vsage
That where they nat lykely ben to spede
Sothe as they ben, with a double visage
They procuren for to pursewe her nede
He prayeth him in his cause to procede
And largely guerdoneth he his trauayle
Litel wote women howe men hem assaile

Another wretche vnto his felowe saith
Thou fischest faire, she that the hath tired
Is false, inconstaunt, and hath no faith
She for the rode of folke is so desired
And as an horse fro daie to daie she is hired
That when thou twinnest fro her companie
Cometh an other, and blered is thyne eye.

Now pricke on fast, and ride thy iourney
While thou art there, for she behind thy bacle
So liberall is, she woll nothyng withsey
But smartly of an other take a smacke
Thus fare these women all the packe
Who so hem trusteth hanged mote he be
Euer thei desire chaunge and noueltee.

Whereof procedeth this but of enuie
For he hymself her ne winne mate
He speaketh her repreue and villanie
As mannes blabbyng tong is wont alwaie
Thus diuers men full oft make assaie
For to distourbe folke in sondrie wise
For thei maie not eschue her empryse.

Many one eke would for no good
That hath in loue his tyme spent and sped
Mē will that his ladie his asking withstode

Ere that he were of her plainly refused
Or waste and baine al that he had mused
Wherfore he can none other remedy
But on his lady shapeth him to lye

Euery woman he saithe is light to gete.
Can none say nay, yf she be wel sought
Who so may leiser haue with her to trete
Of this purpose shal he faile nought
But he on madnesse be so depe brought
That he shende al with open homlynesse
That louen women, they doten as I gesse

To sclaūder women thus what may profite
To gentillesse namely that hem arme should
In defence of women, and hem delite
Is that the ordre of gentillesse wolde
If that a man list gentill to be holde
He must alschewe that therto is contrary
A sclaundrous tonge is his great aduersarye

A foul vice is of tonge to be light
For who so moche clappeth gabbeth ofte
The tonge of man so swifte is and so wight
That whan it is reised vp on lofte
Reason is shewed so slowly and softe
That it him neuer ouertake may
Lorde so these men ben trusty in assay

Al be it that men finde one woman nice
Inconstaunt, recheleſſe, and variable
Deignous, proude, fulfilled, of malyce
Without faithe or loue and disceiuable
Slye, queint, false, in al vntrust coulpable
Wicked, feirse, or ful of cruelte
Yet followeth it not that soche all women be

Whan the high God aungels fourmed had
Amonge hem al, were there none
That founden was malicious and bad?
Yes al men wote ther were many one
That for her pride fill fro heuen anone
Shuld me for thy yeue all angels proude na-
Nay, he that ỹ sustaineth is to blame (me

Of twelue Apostels, one a traitour was
The remenante yet good were and trewe
So yt it happe men finde percas
O woman false, soche good is to eschewe
And deme not al ỹ they therfore be vntrewe
Ise wel mennes owne falsenes
Hem causeth woman to trust the lesse

O euery man ought haue an herte tender
vnto a woman, and deme her honorable
Where his shape be thicke or slender
Or he be good or badde, it is no fable
Euery wight wote ỹ witte hath resonable
That of a woman he discended is
Than is it shame of her to spekе amysse

A wicked tre good frute may non forth bring
For soche the frute is as is the tre
Take hede of whō thou take thy beginning
Let thy mother be mirrour vnto the
Honour her, yf thou wolte honoured be
Dispise her than not in no manere
Lest that therby thy wickednesse apere

An olde prouerbe said is in Englishe
That birde or foule is fuli dishonest
What that he be, and holde ful churlishe
That vseth to defoule his owne nest
Men to say wel of women it is the best
And naught to dispise hem ne deprave
If they wol her honour kepe or saue

The ladies euer complaine hem on clerkes
That they haue made bokes of her diffame
In whiche thy dispise women & her werkes
And speake of hem great reprofe and shame
And causeles yeue hem a wicked name
Thus they dispised be on euery side
Disclaundred an blowen on ful wyde

Tho sory bokes maken mencion
Howe women betraide in especial
Adam, Dauid, Sampson, and Salomon
And many one mo, who maye reherse hem al
The treison that they haue do and shal
The worlde her malice may not cōprehende
As clerkes saine, for it hath none ende

Ouide in his boke called Remedie
Of loue, great reprofe of women writeth
Wherin I trowe he dyd great folie
And euery wight ỹ in soche case him delyteth
A clerkes collome is whan he enditeth
Of women, be it prose, rime, or vers
Say they be wicked, al know he the reuers

And ỹ boke scholers lerned in her childehede
For they of women beware should in age
And to loue hem euer be inured
Sithe to disceiue is set al her corage
They say of perel mē should cast thauantage
Namely of soche as men haue in bewrapped
For many a man by women hath mishapped

No charge is what so these clerkes saine

Of

Of all her writing I doe no cure
All her labour and trauaile is in vain
For betwene me and my ladie nature
Shal not be suffred, while ỹ world maie dure
Thus these clerkes by her cruell tirannie
On selie women kithen her maistrie.

whilom for many of hem wer in my cheine
Tied, and now for vnweldie age
And vnlust, maie not to loue atteine
And saine now that loue is but verie dotage
Thus for thei hem self lacken courage
Thei solde excite by her wicked sawes
For to rebell ayenst me and my lawes.

But maugre hem that blame women moste
Soche is the force of myne impression
That sodainlie I can fell her boste
And all her wrong imaginacion
It shall not be in her election
The foulest slutte in all the toune to refuse
If that me lust, for all that thei conne muse

But her in harte as brenningly desire
As though she were a duchesse or a quene
So can I solkes hartes set on fire
And as me list sende hem ioye or tene
Thei that to women be whet so kene
My sharpe persyng strokes how thei smite
Shull sele and knowe, how thei kerue & bite

Parde this clerke, this subtill Ouide
And many an other disceiued haue be
Of women, as it is knowe full wide
What no men more, and that is great deintee
So ercellent a clerke as was he
And other mo that couden full well preache
Betrapped wer, for aught ỹ thei coud teache.

And trusteth well that it is no maruaile
For women knowen plainly her entent
Thei will how softlie thei coud assaile
Hem, and what falshede thei in harte mente
And thus thei clerkes in her daunger hente
With o benime an other is destroied
And thus these clerkes oft were anoied.

These ladies, ne these gentiles neuertheless
Were none of tho that wrought in this wise
But soche as were vertuelesse
Thei quitten thus these old clerkes wise
To clerkes lesse ought suffice
Then to dispraue women generally
For worship shull thei none gette thereby.

If that these men, that louers hem preten
To women were faithfull, good, and true
And dredde hem to disceiue, or to offende
Women to loue hem would not eschue
But euery daie hath man an harte newe
At on one abide can no while
What force is it soche a wight to begile.

Men beare ebe women vpon hond
That lightly and without any pain
Thei women be, thei can no wight withstond
That his disease list to hem complain
Thei be so freele, thei maie hem not refrain
But who so liketh hem maie lightly haue
So be her hartes easie into graue.

To maister Johan de Moone, as I suppose
Then it was a leude occupacioun
In making of the Romante of the rose
So many a sligh imaginacioun
And perilles for to rollen vp and doun
The long processe, so many a slight cautell
For to disceiue a selie damosell.

Nought can I saie, ne my wit comprehende
That art, pain, and subtiltie should saile
For to conquere, and sone make an ende
When men a feble place shall assaile
And sone also to venquishe a battaile
Of whiche no wight maie make resistence
Ne harte hath none to make any defence.

Then mote folowe of necessitie
Sith art alketh so greate engine and pain
A woman to disceiue what so she be
Of constaunce be thei not so barain
Is that some of these clerkes sain
But thei be as women ought to be
Sadde, constante, and fulfilled of pitee.

How frendly was Medea to Jason
In conquerynge of the Flece of gold
How kindly quit he her true affeccion
By whom victorie he gate as he would
How maie this man for shame be so bolde
To falsen her, that fro his death and shame
Him kept, and gate him so great prise & name

Of Troie also the traitour Eneas
The faithlesse wretche, how he him forswore
To Dido, that quene of Cartage was
That hym releued of his smertes sore
What gentillesse might she haue doe more
Then she with harte vnfained to hym kidde
And what mischief to her therof after betide.

In my legende of natures maie men finde
Who so liketh therein for to rede
That othe ne behest maie man binde
Of reprouable shame haue thei no drede
In mannes harte trouthe hath no stede
The soile is nauzt, there maie no trothe grow
To women namely it is not vnknowe.

Clerkes saine also there is no malice
Unto womans wicked crabbidnelle
O woman, how shalt thou thy self cheuice
Sith men of thee soche harme witnesse
Beth ware women of her fikelnesse
Kepe thyne owne, what men clappe or crake
And some of hem shall smarte I vndertake

Malice of women what is it to drede
Thei slea no man, destroye no citees
Ne oppresse folke, ne ouerlede
Betraie Empires, Realmes, or Duchees
Ne bireuen men her landes ne her mees
Enpoyson folke, ne houses set on fire
Ne falle contractes make for no hire.

Trust, parfite loue, entire charitee
Feruent will, and entalented corage
All thewes good, as sitteth well to be
Haue women euer of custome and vsage
And well thei conne mannes ire alwage
With soft wordes, discrete and benigne
What thei be inward thei shewe outward by.

(signe.

Womans harte vnto no crueltie
Enclined is, but thei be charitable
Pitous, deuote, full of humilitie
Shamefaste, debonaire, and amiable
Dredefull, and of wordes measurable
What women these haue not parauenture
Foloweth not the waie of her nature.

When saine our first mother natheleſſe
Made all mankinde lese his libertie
And naked it of ioye doubtlesse
For Goddes hesse disobeyed she
When she presumed to tasse of the tree
That God forbade, that she eate therof should
And ne had the deuill be, no more she would

The enuious swelling, that the fende our foe
Had vnto man in harte for his wealth
Sent a serpent, and made her for to goe
To disceiue Eue, & thus was mans wealth
Birafte hym by the fende in a stealth
The woman not knowyng of that disceipt
God wote full ferre was it from her conceipt

Wherefore I saie, this good woman Eue
Our father Adam disceiued nought
There maie no man for disceipt it preue
Properly, but that she in harte and thought
Had it compassed first or she it wrought
And for soche was not her impression
Men maie it call no deceipte of her by reason

Ne no wight disceiueth, but he purpose
The fende this disceipt caste, and nothyng she
Then is it wrong to deme or suppose
That of his harme she should the cause be
Wyte the fende, and his be the maugre
And excused haue her innocence
Saue onely that she brake obedience.

And touchyng this, full fewe men there be
Unnethes any dare I safely saie
Fro daie to daie, as men maie all daie se
But that the hesse of God thei disobaie
Haue this in minde sirs I you praie
If that ye be discrete and reasonable
Ye woll her holde the more excusable.

And wher men saie in man is stedfastnesse
And woman is of her courage vnstable
Who maie of Adam beare soche a witnesse
Telleth me this, was he not chaungeable
Thei bothe weren in o case semblable
Saue willyng the fende disceiued Eue
And so did she not Adam by your leue.

Yet was this sinne happie to mankinde
The fende disceiued was for all his sleight
For aught he coud him in his sleightes winde
For his trespace came fro heauen on height
God, to discharge man of his weight
Flesche and blood tooke of a virgine
And suffred death, hym to deliuer of pine.

And God, to whō there maie nothyng hid be
If he in woman knowen had soche malice
As men recorde of hem in generaltee
Of our Ladie of life reperatrice
Nolde haue be borne, but that she of vice
Was voide, and full of vertue well he wiste
Endowed, of her to be borne hym liste.

Her heaped vertue hath soche excellence
That all to leaue is mannes facultie
To declare it, and therefore in suspence
Her due praisyng put nedes must be
But thus I saie, verely that she
Next God, best frende is that to man longeth
The keye of mercie by her girdle hongeth.

And

And of mercie hath euery man soche nede
That relyng that, farwell the ioye of man
And of her power now taketh rizt good hede
She mercie maie well, and purchace can
Displeaseth her not, honoureth that woman
And other women all for her sake
And but ye doe, your sorowe shall awake.

In any booke also where can ye finde
That of the werkes of death or of life
Of Jesu, spelleth or maketh any minde
That women hym forsoke for wo or strife
Where was there any wight so ententife
About hym as woman, proued none
The Apostles hym forsoken euerichone.

Women forsoke hym not for all the fateth
Of holie churche in woman left onely
This is no lees, for thus holy writte saieth
Looke and ye shall so finde it hardely
And therefore I maie well preue thereby
That, in woman reigneth stable constaunce
And in men is the chaunge of variaunce.

Thus precious gēme of martirs Margarite
That of thy blood dredest none effusion
Thou louer true, thou maiden mansuete
Thou constante woman in thy passion
Ouercame the fendes temptacion
And many a wight conuerted thy doctrine
Unto the faithe of holy God thou virgine.

But vnderstandeth this, I onely cōmend her
By enchelon of her virginitie (nought
Trusteth it came neuer in thought
For euer werre I pensif chastitie
And euer shall, but lo this meueth me
Her louyng harte, and constante to her laie
Driue out of remembraunce I ne maie.

Now holdeth this for ferme, and for no lie
That this true and iuste commendacion
Of women tell I for no flatterie
Ne bicause of pride or elacion
But onely lo, for this entencion
To yeue hem courage of perseueraunce
In vertue, and her honour to auaunce.

The more vertue, the lasse is the pride
Uertue so digne is and so noble in kinde
That vice and he woll not infere abide
He putteth vices cleane out of his minde
He flieth fro hem, he leaueth hem behinde
O woman that of vertue art hostresse
Greate is thy honour and thy worthinesse.

Then woll I thus conclude and define
We you commaunde our ministers echone
That redie ye be our hestes to encline
That of these falle men our rebell sone
Ye doe punishement and that anone
Voide hem our court, & banishe hem for euer
So that therein more come thei neuer.

Fulfilled be it, ceasyng all delaie
Looke there be none excusacion
Written in the lustie moneth of Maie
In our paleis where many a million
Of louers true haue habitacion
The yere of grace ioyfull and foconde
A thousande foure hundred and seconde.

Explicit.

Thus endeth the letter of Cupide.

A Ballade in

commendacion of our Ladie.

A Thousande stories coud I no rehearce
Of olde Poetes, touching this matter
How that Cupide the hartes gan so pearce
Of his seruantes settyng hem in fere
Lo here the fine of therrour and the fere
Lo here of loue the guerdone and greuaunce
That euer to wo her seruauntes doe auaunce

Wherfore now plainly I woll my stile dresse
Of one to speake, at nede that woll not faile
Alas for dole I ne can ne maie expresse
Her passyng prise, and that is no meruaile
O winde of grace, now blowe vnto my saile
O auriate licour of Cleo for to write
My penne enspire of that I woll endite.

Alas, vnworthie I am an vnable
To loue soche one, all women surmountyng
But she be benigne to me and merciable
That is of pitie the welle and eke the springe
Wherefore of her in laude and in praisyng
So as I can, supported by her grace
Right thus I saie, knelyng before her face.

A ballade of our Ladie.

O sterre of sterres with thy streames clere
Sterre of the sea, to shipment light and gide
O lustie liuyng mosse pleasaunt to appere
Whose bryzt beames ẏ cloudes maie not hide
O waie of life to hem that go or ride
Hauen after tempest surest vp to riue
On me haue merce for thy ioyes liue.

O mirthe of martyrs, sweter then Sitole
Of confessours also richest donatife
Unto virgines eternall Lauriole
Afore all woman hauyng prerogatife
Mother and maide, bothe widowe and wife
Of all the worlde is none but thou alone
Now sith thou maie, be succour to my mone.

O rightfull rule, O bote of holinesse
And lightsome line of pitie for to plain
Originall beginning of grace & all goodnesse
And clenest conduct of vertue mosse souerain
Mother of mercie, our trouble to restrain
Chamber and closet clennest of chastitie
And named herbrough of the deitie.

O trustie turtle truefastest of all true
O curteisie columbe, replete of all meknesse
O Nightingale with thy notes newe
O Popiniaie pured with all clennesse
O laueroke of loue, singyng with swetnesse
Phebus awaityng till on thy brest he light
Under thy wing at domesdaie vs dight.

O closet garden all voide of weedes wicke
Cristallin welle, of clerenesse clere consigned
Fructified olive of foiles faire and thicke
And redolent Cedre most dere worthy digned
Remember on sinners that to the be assigned
Or wicked fendes her wrathe on hem wreche
Lanterne of light thou her liues leche.

O rubie rubified in the passion
Of thy sonne, vs haue emong in minde
O stedfast diametre of duracion
That sewe feres any time might thou finde
For none to hym was founden halfe so kinde
O hardie harte, O louyng creature
What was it but loue that made ẏ so endure.

Paradise of pleasaunce, gladsome to all good
Benigne braunchelet of the Pine tree
Vinarie enuermailed, refresher of our bood
Licour ayen al langour ẏ palled maie not be
Blisfull blomie blosome, bidyng in bountee
Thy mantell of mercie on our miserie sprede
And er wo awaie wrappe vs vnder thy wede

Semely saphyre, depe loupe and blewe ewage
Stable as the loupe ewage of pitie
Thys is to saie the freshest of visage
Thou louest vnchaunged hem ẏ seruen thee
And if offence or variyng in hem be
Thou art aie redie vpon her wo to rue
And hem receiuest with harte full true.

O rodie rosier, flouring without spine
Fountain al filthlesse, as virell currant clere
Sum drop of thy gracefull newe to vs propine
O light wout nebule, shinyng in thy sphere
Medecine to mischeues, pucell without pere
Flãbe doun the dolefull light of thin influẽce
Remẽbryng thy seruãtes for thy magnificẽce

O goodlie gladded when that Gabriel
With ioy thee grette, that maie not be nõbred
Or halfe the blisse who coud write or tell
When the holy ghoste to thee was obumbred
Wherthrough fendes were bitterly encõbred
O wemlesse maide embelished in his birthe
That man and angell thereof ẏ adden mirthe

Of all christen protectrice and tutele
Retourne of exiled put in the prescripcion
To hem that erren in the pathe of her sequele
To werie forwandred tent and pauilion
To faint and to freshe the pausacion
Unto burelie, bothe rest and remedie
Fructfull to all tho that in her affie.

Lo here the blosme and the budde of glorie
Of whiche the prophet so long spake before
Lo here the fame that was in memorie
Of Esaie, so long or he was borne
Lo here of Dauid the delicious corne
Lo here the grounde of life into bilde
Becomyng man our raunsome for to yelde.

To hem that rennen thou art itenerarie
O blisfull brauie to knightes of thy warre
To werie werkmen she is diourne denarie
Mede vnto mariners that haue sailed farre
Laureate croune stremyng as a starre
To hem that put hem in palastre for thy sake
Cours of her cõquest, thou white as any lake

O glorious viole and vite inuiolate
O firie Titan, perlyng with thy bemes
Whose vertuous briztnes was in brest vbrat
That al the world embelished with thy lemes
Conseruatrice of kinges, dukes, and realmes
Of Isaies seede swete sunamite
Welure my mourning mine own Margarite

O

O soueraignest sought out of Syon
Cockle with gold dewe from aboue berained
Dewe bushe vnbrent, firelesse fire set on
Flambing with feruēce, not w heate pained
Duryng daisie that no weather stained
Fleece vndefouled of gentilest Gedion
And fruictifiyng fairest the yerde of Aaron.

The mightie arche, probatise piscine
Laughyng aurore, and of peace oliue
Columpne & base, vp bearyng from abime
Why nere I connyng here to discriue
Chosen of Joseph, whom he tooke to wiue
Unknowyng hym, childyng by miracle
And of our manly figure the tabernacle.

I haue none Englishe conuenient and digne
Myne hartes heale lady thee with to honour
Iuorie cleane, therefore I woll resigne
Into thyne hande, till thou list succour
To helpe my makyng both florishe and flour
Then should I shewe in loue how I brende
In songes makyng, thy name to commende.

For if I coud before thyne excellence
Syngen in loue I would what I fele
And euer standen Ladie in thy presence
To shewe in open how I loue you wele
And sith although your hart be made of stele
To you withouten any disceueraunce
I'ay en vous toute ma fiance

Where might I loue euer better beset
Then in this Lilie likyng to beholde
That lace of loue, the bonde so well thou knit
That I maie see thee or myne harte colde
And or I passe out of my daies olde
Tofore syngyng euermore vtterly
Your iyen twoo woll slea me sodainly.

For loue I langour, blissed be soch sicknesse
Sith it is for you my hartely suffisaunce
I can not els saie in my distresse
So faire one hath myne hart in gouernaūce
And after that I begin on esperaunce
With feble entune, though it thine hart perce
Yet for thy sake this letter I doe reherse.

God wote on musike I can not, but I gesse
Alas why so, that I might saie or syng
So loue I you my owne souerain maistresse
And euer shall without departyng
Mirrour of beautie, for you out shuld I ring
In remembraunce eke of your iyen clere
Thus ferre from you my souerain Ladie dere

So would God your loue would me slo
Sith for your sake I sing daie by daie
Harte why nilte thou breake a two
Sith with my Ladie dwell I ne maie
Thus many a roundell and many a virelaie
In freshe Englishe, when I me laiser finde
I doe recorde, on you to haue mynde.

Now ladie mine, sith I you loue and drede
And you vnchaunged euer linde in o degre
Whose grace ne maie flie fro your womāhede
Disdaineth not for to remembre on me
Myne harte bledeth for I maie not you se
And sith ye wotte my meanyng desirous
Plores pour moy s'il vous plaist amoureus.

What marueile is though I in pain be
I am departed from you my souerain
Fortune alas, dont vient la destenie
That in no wise I can ne maie attain
To see the beautie of your iyen twain
Wherefore I saie, for tristesse doeth me grame
Tant me fait mal departir de ma dame.

Why nere my wissing brouzt to soche esploit
That I might saie for ioye of your presence
Or a mon cœur ce qui voulloit
Or a mon cœur, the highest excellence
That euer had wight, & sith mine aduertence
Is in you, reweth on my paines smarte
I am so sore wounded to the harte.

To liue well merie twoo louers were ifere
So maie I saie withouten any blame
If any man to wilde were
I coud hym teache for to be tame
Let hym go loue and se where it be game
For I am bridled vnto sobernesse
For her that is of women chief princesse.

But euer whē thought my hart shuld enbrace
Then vnto me is best remedie
When I looke on your goodly freshe face
So merie a merrour coud I neuer espie
And if I coud I would it magnifie
For neuer none was so faire ifounde
To reken hem all, and also Rosamounde.

And finally with mouthe and will present
Of double iye without repentaunce
Mine hart I yeue you Ladie in this entent
That ye shall holly therof haue gouernaunce
Takyng my leaue with hartes obeisaunce
(Salue regina) syngyng last of all
To be our helpe when we to thee call.

All our loue is but idleneſſe (tain
Saue your loue alone, who might therto at-
Who ſo woll haue a name of gentilleſſe
I counſaile hym in loue that he not fain
Thou ſwete Ladie, refute in euery pain
Whoſe mercie moſte to me auaileth
To gie by grace, when that foꝛtune faileth.

Nought maie be told withouten any fable
Your high renome your womanly beautee
Your gouernaunce to all woꝛſhip able
Putteth euery harte in eaſe in his degree
O violet, O floure deſiree
Sith I am foꝛ you ſo amerous
Eſtreignes moy de cœur ioyeus

With feruent hart my bꝛeſt hath bꝛoſt on fire
L'ardant eſpoer que mon cœur point eſt mort
D'auoir l'amour de celle que ie deſire
I meane you ſwete moſte pleaſaunt of poꝛte
Et ie ſay bien que ce n'eſt pas mon tort
That foꝛ you ſyng, ſo as I maie foꝛ mone
Foꝛ your departyng, alone I liue alone.

Though I might I would none other cheſe
In your ſeruice I would been founden ſadde
Therefoꝛe I loue no labour that ye leſe
When in longyng foꝛeſt ye be ſtadde
Looke vp you louers and be right gladde
Ayenſt ſainct Valentines daie
Foꝛ I haue cheſe that neuer foꝛſake I maie.

Explicit.

¶ Jhon Gower, vn-

to the noble King Henry the.iiij.

Noble woꝛthie kyng Henꝛie the fearth
In whom the gladde foꝛtune is befall
The people to gouerne here vpon yearth
God hath thee choſen in comfoꝛt of vs all
The woꝛſhip of this lād which was doun fal
Now ſtāt vpright thꝛough grace of thy good-
Which euery man is hold foꝛ to bleſſe (neſſe

The high God of his iuſtice alone
The right which longeth to thy regalie
Declared hath to ſtande in thy perſone
And moꝛe then God maie no man iuſtifie
Thy title is knowe vpon thyne auncеſtrie
The landes folk hath eke thy right affirmed
So ſtant thy reigne, of God & man confirmed

There is no man maie ſaie in otherwiſe
That God hymſelf ne hath the right declared
Whereof the lande is bounde to thy ſeruice
Whiche foꝛ defaute of helpe hath long cared
But now there is no mannes harte ſpared
To loue and ſerue, and woꝛche thy pleaſaūce
And all this is thꝛough Gods puruеiaunce.

In all thing whiche is of God begonne
There foloweth grace if it be well gouerned
Thus tellen thei whiche olde bookes conne
Wherof my loꝛde I wote well thou art lerned
Alle of thy God, ſo ſhalt thou not be warned
Of no requeſt whiche is reaſonable
Foꝛ God vnto the good is fauourable.

King Salomon whiche had at his aſkyng
Of God, what thing hym was leueſt craue
He chaſe wiſedome vnto gouernyng
Of Gods folke, the whiche he would ſaue
And as he chaſe it fill hym foꝛ haue
Foꝛ thꝛough his wit while that his reign laſt
He gate hym peace and reſt into his laſt.

But Alexander as telleth his ſtoꝛie
Vnto the God beſought in other waie
Of all the woꝛlde to win the victoꝛie
So that vnder his ſwerde it might obaie
In warre he had all that he would pꝛaie
The mightie God behight hym that beheſte
The woꝛlde wanne, and had it of conqueſte.

But though it fill at thilke tyme ſo
That Alexander his aſkyng hath atchiued
This ſinfull woꝛlde was all Panem tho
Was none whiche hath the high God beleued
No wōder was though thilk woꝛlde was gre-
Though a tyꝛant his purpoſe mizt win (ued
All was vengeaunce and infoꝛtune of ſin.

But now the faith of Chꝛiſt is come a place
Emong the pꝛinces in this yearth here
It ſitte hem well to doe pitie and grace
But yet it muſt be tempoꝛed in manere
Foꝛ thei finden cauſe in the mattere
Vpon the poinct, what afterward betide
The lawe of right ſhall not be laied a ſide.

So maie a king of warre the voyage
Oꝛdain and take, as he thereto is holde
To claime and aſke his rightfull heritage

In

In al places where it is witholde
But otherwise if god him selfe would
Affirme loue and peace bitwene the kinges
Peace is the best aboue al erthely thinges

Good is to eschewe warre, and nathelees
A king may make warre vpon his right
For of bataile the final ende is pees
Thus stant the lawe that a worthy knight
Upon his trouth may go to the fight
But if so were that he might chese
Better is the peace of which may no mā lese

To stere peace ought euerychе on lyue
First for to sette his liege lorde in rest
And eke these other men that they ne striue
For so this lande may stande at best
What king that wolde be the worthyest
The more he might our deedly warre cease
The more he should his worthinesse encrease

Peace is the chefe of al the worldes welth
And to the heuen it ledeth eke the way
Peace is of soule and life the mannes helth.
Of pestilence, and doth the warre away
My liege lorde take hede of that I say
If warre may be lefte, take peace on hande
Whiche may not be without goddes sande

With peace stant euery creature in rest
Wthout peace there may no lyfe be gladde
Aboue al other good peace is the best
Peace hath him self whā werre is al bestadde
The peace is safe, the warre is euer dradde
Peace is of al charite the kay
Whiche hath the life and soule for to way

My liege lorde if that the lyste to seche
The soth ensāples what ẏ war hath wrouzt
Thou shalt wel here of wise mēnes speche
That deedly warre turneth in to nought
For if these old bookes be wel ysought
There mizt thou se what thīg ẏ war hath do
Bothe of conquest and conquerour also

For vaine honour, or for the worldes good
They that whilom the stronge warres made
Wher be they now, bethinke wel in thy mood
The day is gone, the night is derke and fade
Her cruelte whiche made hem than glade
They sorowē now, & yet haue nauzt ẏ more
The blode is shad, which no man may restore

The warre is mother of the wronges al
It sleeth the priest in holy churche at masse
Forlith the maide, and doth her flour to sal
The warre maketh the great cite lasse
And dothe the lawe his rules ouerpasses
Ther is nothig wherof mischefe may growe
Whiche is not caused of the warre I trowe

The warre bringeth in pouertie at his heles
Wherof the comen people is sore greued
The war hath set his cart on thilke wheles
Where that fortune may nat be beleued
For whan men wene best to haue acheued
Ful ofte it is al newe to begin
The warre hath nothing siker tho he win

For thy my worthy prince in Christes halue
As for a parte whose faith thou hast be gide
Ley to this olde sore a newe salue
And do the warre away what so betide
Purchace peace and set it by thy syde
And suffre nat thy people be deuoured
So shal thy name euer after stand honoured

If any man be nowe or euer was
Ayen the peace thy preuy counsailour
Lette god be of thy counsaile in this caas
And put away the cruel warryour
For God whiche is of man the creatour
He wolde not men slough his creature
Without cause of deedly forfaiture

Where nedeth most, behoueth most to loke
My lorde, howe so thy warres be without
Of time passed, who that hede toke
Good were at home to se right wel about
For euermore the worste is for to dout
But if thou mightest parfite peace attaine
There should be no cause for to plaine

About a king good counsaile is to preise
Aboue al other thinges most vailable
But yet a king within him selfe shal peise
And seen the thinges that be resonable
And therupon he shal his wittes stable
Among the men to sette peace in euin
For loue of him whiche is the king of heuyn

A, wel is him that shedde neuer blode
But if it were in cause of right wysenes
For yf a kynge the peril vnderstode
What is to sle the people, than I gesse
The deedly warres and the heuines
Wherof peace distourbed is ful ofte
Shuld at some time cesse and wexe soft:

O kinge fulfilled of grace and knighthode

Remēbre vpon this pointe for Chriſtes ſake
If peace be profered vnto thy manhode
Thine honour ſaue, let it not be forſake
Though thou ꝑ warres darſt wel vndertake
After reaſon yet tempre thy courage
For lyke to peace there is none auauntage

My worthy lorde, thinke wel howe ſo befall
Of thilke lore, as holy bokes ſaine
Chriſt is the heed, and we be membres al
As wel the ſubiecte as the ſoueraine
So ſitte it wel that charite be plaine
Whiche vnto God him ſelfe moſt accordeth
So as the lore of Chriſtes worde recordeth

In tholde lawe or Chriſt him ſelfe was bore
Amonge the.x. commaundementes I rede
Howe that manſlaughter ſhoulde be forbore
Soche was the wil that tyme of the godhede
But afterward whā Chriſt toke his māhede
Peace was the firſt thing he let do crie
Ayenſt the worldes rancour and enuie

And or Chriſt went out of this erthe here
And ſtighed to heuin, he made his teſtament
Where he bequath to his diſciples there
And yaue his peace, whiche is the foūdement
Of charite, without whole aſſent
The worldes peace may neuer wel be tried
Ne loue kept, ne lawe iuſtified

The Jewes with ꝑ painims hadden werre
But they among hem ſelfe ſtode euer ī peace
Why ſhould than our peace ſtande out of erre
Which Chriſt hath choſe vnto his owen encreſe
For Chriſt is more than was Moyſes
And Chriſt hath ſette the parfite of the lawe
The whiche ſhould in no wiſe be withdrawe

To yeue vs peace was cauſe why Chriſt dide
Without peace may nothing ſtonde auailed
But nowe a man may ſe on euery ſide
Howe Chriſtes faith is euery day aſſailed
With painims diſtroied ⁊ ſo batailed
That for defaute of helpe and of defence
Vnneth hath Chriſt his dewe reuerence

The right faith to kepe of holy churche
The firſt point is named of knighthode
And euery man is holde for to worche
Vpon the point that ſtaute to his manhode
But now alas, the fame is ſpred ſo brode
That euery man this thing complaineth
And yet is there no man that helpe ordaineth

The worldes cauſe is waited ouer al
There be the warres redy to the ful
But Chriſtes owne cauſe in ſpecial
There ben the ſwerdes and the ſpeares dul
And with the ſentence of the Popes bul
As for to done the folke paine obey
The churche is tourned al another wey

It is wonder aboue any mannes wit
Without war how Chriſtes faith was won
And we that be vpon this erthe yet
Ne kepe it not as it was firſt begon
To euery creature vnder the ſonne
Chriſt bad him ſelfe that we ſhoulde preche
And to the folke his Euangely teche

More light it is to kepe than to make
But that we founden made tofore honde
We kepe not, but let it lightly ſlake
The peace of Chriſt hath al to broke his bōde
We reſt o ur ſelfe, and ſuffren euery lond
To flee eche other, as thinge vndefended
So ſtant the warre, ⁊ peace is not amended

But though the heed of holy churche aboue
Ne do not al his hole buſineſſe
Amonge the people to ſet peace and loue
Theſe kinges oughten of her right wyſeneſſe
Her owne cauſe amonge hem ſelfe redreſſe
Tho Peters ſhip as now hath loſte his ſtere
It lythe in hem the barge for to ſtere

If holy churche after the dewte
Of Chriſtes worde ne be nat al auiſed
To make peace, accorde, and vnite
Amonge the kinges that be now deuiſed
Yet natheles the lawe ſtand aſſiſed
Of mannes witte to be ſo reſonable
Without that to ſtande him ſelfe ſtable

Of holy churche we ben children al
And euery childe is holde for to bowe
Vnto the mother, how that euer it fal
Or elſe he muſt reaſon diſalowe
And for that cauſe a knight ſhall firſt auowe
The right of holy churche to defende
That no man ſhal the priuilege offende

Thus were it good to ſette al in euyn
The worldes princes and the prelats bothe
For loue of him whiche is the king of heuyn
And if men ſhould algate weren wrothe
The ſarazins, whiche vnto Chriſt been lothe
Let men be armed ayenſt hem to fight
So maye the knight his dede of armes right

Vpon

Vpon.iii.pointes stant Christs peace oppre-
First holy churche in her selfe deuided (sed
Whiche ought of reason first to be redressed
But yet so highe a cause is not desided
And thus whan humble pacience is prided
The remenaunt whiche that they shuld rule
No wonder is though it stande out of rule

Of that the heed is sicke the lymmes aken
These reignes that to Christes peace belōgen
For worldes good these deedly warres makē
Whiche helplesse, as in balaunce hongen
The heed aboue hem hath nat vnderfongen
To set peace, but euery man sleeth other
And in this wise hath charite no brother

The two defautes bringen in the thirde
Of myscreantes that seen how we debate
Betwene the two, they fallen in a mydde
Where now al day they finde an open gate
Lo, thus the deedly warre stant algate
But euer I hope of king Henries grace
That he it is which shal the peace embrace

My worthy noble prince and king anoynt
Whome God hath of his grace so preserued
Beholde and se the world vpon this point
As for thy part, that Christes peace be serued
So shal thy high mede be deserued
To him whiche al shal quite at laste
For this life here may no while laste

Se Alexander, Hector, and Julius
Se Machabeus, Dauid, and Josue
Se Charlemaine, Godefray, and Arthus
Fulfilled of warre and of mortalyte
Her fame abytte, but al is but vanite
For death, which hath the warres vnder fote
Hath made an ende, of which ther is no bote

So many a man the soth wete and knowe
That peace is good for euery kinge to haue
The fortune of the warre is euer vnknowe
But wher peace is, ther is the marches saue
That now is vp, to morow is vnder graue
The myghtye God hath al grace in hande
Without him men may not longe stande

Of the tennes to winne or lese a chace
May no life wete or that the bal be ronne
Al stant in god what thing mē shal purchace
Thende is in hym or that it be begonne
Men saine the wolle when it is well sponne
Doth that the cloth is stronge and profitable
And els it maye neuer be durable

The worldes chaunces vpon auenture
Ben euer sette, but thilke chaunce of pees
Is so behouely to the creature
That is aboue al other peerles
But it may not beget natheles
Amonge the men to laste any while
But where the herte is plaine without gile

The peace is as it were a sacrament
To fore the God, & shal with wordes plaine
Without any double entendement
Be treated, for the trouth can not faine
But yf the men within hem selfe ben vaine
The substaūce of the peace may not be trewe
But euery day it chaungeth vpon newe

But who that is of charite parfite
He voideth al sleightes ferre awaye
And sette his worde vpon the same plyte
Where that his hert hath foūde a siker waye
And thus when conscience is trewly waye
And that these ben handled with the wise
It shal abyde, and stande in al wise

The Apostle saith, ther may no life be good
Whiche is not grounded vpon charite
For charite ne shedde neuer blood
So hath the warre as there no properte
For thilke vertue whche is sayd pite
With charite so ferforthe is acquainted
That in her may no false sēblant be paynted

Cassodore, whose writinge is authorised
Saithe: where that pite reigneth is grace
Thrugh which ẏ peace hath al his welth as-
So ẏ af warre he dredeth no manace (sysed
Where pyte dwelleth in the same place
There maye no deedly cruelte soiourne
Wherof that mercy shoulde his way tourne

To se what pite forth with mercy doth
The cronique is at Rome in thilke empire
Of Constantine, wiche is a tale sothe
When him was liuer his owne death desire
Then do the yonge children to martire
Of crueltie he lefte the quarele
Pyte he wrought, and pite was his hele

For thilke mannes pite whiche he dede
God was pitous, and made him hole at al
Siluester came, and in the same stede
Yaue him baptisme first in spacial

Whiche did awaye the sinne original
And al his lepre it hath so purified
That his pite for euer is magnified

Pite was cause why this Emperour
Was hole in body and in soule bothe
And Rome also was sette in thilke honour
Of Cristes faith, so that the leue of loth
Whiche hadden be with Christ tofore wroth
Receiued were vnto Cristes lore
Thus shal pite be praised euermore

My worthy liege lorde Henry by name
Whiche Englande hatte to gouerne and right
Men ought wel thy pite to proclame
Whiche openliche in al the worldes sight
Ie sheweth, with the helpe of God almight
To yeue vs peace which lõg hath be debated
Wherof thy prise shal neuer be abated

My lorde, in whom hath euer yet be founde
Pite, without spotte of violence
Kepe thilke peace alwaye within bounde
Whiche God hath planted in thy conscience
So shal the cronique of thy pacience
Amonge the saintes be taken into memorie
To the legende of perdurable glorie

And to thin erthely prise, so as I can
Whiche euery man is holde to commende
I Gower, whiche am al thy liege man
This letter vnto thine excellence I sende
As I whiche euer vnto my liues ende
Wol pray for the state of thy persone
In worshippe of thi sceptre and thy throne

Not onely to my kinge of peace I write
But to these other princes Christen al
That eche of hem his owne herte endite
And lease the warre or more mischefe fal
Sette eche the rightful puppe vpon his stall
Kepe charite, and drawe pite to hande
Maintain lawe, and so the peace shall stande

Explicit carmen, de pacis commendacione quod ad laudem & memoriam serenissimi principis domini regis Henrici Quarti, suus humilis orator Iohannes Gower composuit.

Electus Christi, pie rex Henrice fuisti
Qui bene venisti, cum propria regna petisti
Tu mala vicistique bonis bona restituisti
Et populo tristi, noua gaudia contribuisti
Est mihi spes lata, quod aduc per te renouata
Succedent fata veteri probitate beata
Est tibi nam grata, gratia sponte data
Henrici quarti, primus regni fuit annus
Quo mihi defecit visus ad acta mea
Omnia tẽpus habent finem natura ministrat
Quem virtute sua frangere nemo potest
Vltra posse nihil quamuis mihi velle remansit
Amplius vt scribam non mihi posse manet
Dũ potui scripsi, sed nũc quia curua senectus
Turbauit sensus scripta relinquo scolis
Scribat qui veniet post me discretior alter
Ammodo namque manus & mea penna silẽt
Hoc tamen in fine verborum queso meorum
Prospera quod statuat regna futura Deus.

Explicit.

A saiyng of dan Iohn.

Ther bethe foure thinges that maketh man a foole
Honour first putteth him in outrage
And alder next solitarie and foole
The second is vnweldy croked age
Women also bring men in dotage
And mighty wine in many diuers wise
Distempren folke whiche bene holden wise
Yet of the same.

Ther bene foure thinges causing gret folye
Honour first and vnwildy age
Women and wine I dare eke specify
Make wise men fallen in dotage
Wherfore by counseil of Philosophers sage
In gret honour learne this of me
With thine estate haue humilite

Balade de bon consail.

If it befall that God the list visite
With any tourment or aduersite
Thanke first the lorde, and thy selfe to quite
Vpon sufferaunce and humilite
Founde thou thy quarel what euer that it be
Make thy defence & thou shalt haue no losse
The remẽbraunce of Christ and of his crosse

Explicit.

Of the Cuckowe

and the Nightingale.

Ye God of loue, and benedicite
Howe mighty and howe great a lorde is he
For he can make of lowe hertes hie
And of hye lowe, and lyke for to die
And harde hertes he can maken free

He can make within a litle stounde
Of sicke folke hole, freshe and sounde
And of hole he can make seke
He can binde and vnbinden eke
That he wol haue bounden or vnbounde

To tel his might my wit may not suffise
For he can make of wise folke ful nice
For he may do al that he will deuice
And lithy folke to dishonen vice
And proude hertes he can make agrise

Shortly al that euer he wol he may
Against him dare no wight say naye
For he can glad and greue whom him lyketh
And who that he wol he loweth or siketh
And most he might his shedeth euer in May

For euery true gentle herte free
That with him is or thinketh for to be
Again May nowe shal haue some stering
Or to ioye or els to some mourning
In no season, so moche as thinketh me

For whan they maye here the birdes singe
And se the floures and the leues springe
That bringeth into her remembraunce
A maner ease medled with greuaunce
And lusty thoughtes ful of great longing

And of that longing cometh heuinesse
And therof groweth oft great sikenesse
And for lacke of that that they desire
And thus in May ben hertes set on fire
So that they brennen forth in gret distresse

I spehe this of feling trewly
Al I be olde and vnlusty
Yet I haue felte of ẏ sickenesse through May
Bothe hote and cold, and ares euery day
How sore iwis there wote no wight but I

I am so shaken with the feuers white
Of al this May slepe I but a lite
And also it is not lyke to me
That any herte shoulde slepy be
In whom that loue his fery darte wol smite

But as I lay this other night waking
I thought howe louers had a tokening
And amonge hem it was a commune tale
That it were good to here the Nightingale
Rather than the leude Cuckowe singe

And than I thought anon as it was day
I wolde go somwhere to assay
If that I might a Nightingale here
For yet had I none herde of al that yere
And it was tho the thirde night of May

And anon as I the day aspide
No lenger would I in my beedde abide
But vnto a wodde that was fast by
I went forthe alone boldely
And helde the way downe by a broke side

Tyl I came to a launde of white and grene
So faire one had I neuer in bene
The grounde was grene, ypoudred with daisye
The floures and the greues like hie
Al grene and white, was nothing els sene

There sate I downe among the faire floures
And sawe ẏ birdes trippe out of her bowres
There as they rested hem al the night
They were so ioyful of the dayes lyght
They began of Maye for to done houres

They coude that seruice al by rote
There was many a louely note
Some songe loude as they had plained
And some in other maner voice yfained
And some al out with the ful throte

They proyned hem, & made hem right gay
And daunseden and lepten on the spray
And euermore two and two in fere
Right so as they had chosen hem to yere
In Feuerere vpon saint Valentines day

And the riuer that I sat vpon
It made soche a noise as it ron
Accordaunt with the birdes armony
Me thought it was the best melody
That might ben yherde of any mon

And for delyte, I wotte neuer howe

I fel in soche a slombre and a swowe
Nat al a slepe ne fully waking
And in that swowe me thought I herde singe
The sory birde the leude cuckowe

And that was on a tree right fast by
But who was than euil apaide but I
Now God (quod I) that died on the crois
yeue sorowe on the, and on thy leude bois
Ful lytle ioye haue I now of thy crie

And as I with the cuckow thus gan chide
I herde in the next bush beside
A nyghtingale so luftely singe
That with her clere voce she made ringe
Thorough all the grene wood wide

Ah, good nightingale (quod I) then
A litle hast thou ben to longe hen
For here hath ben the leude cuckow
And longen longes rather than hast thou
I pray to God euil fire her bren

But now I wol you tel a wondre thing
As longe as I lay in that swowning
Me thought I wist what the birdes ment
And what they sayd, & what was her entent
And of her speche I had good knowinge

There herde I the nightingale say
Now good cuckow go some where awaye
And let vs that can singen dwellen here
For euery wight eschueth the to here
Thy songes be so elenge in good fay

What (quod she) what may the aylen nowe
It thinketh me, I singe as wel as thou
For my songe is both true and plaine
And though I can not crakel so in vaine
As thou dost in thy throte, I wot neuer how

And euery wight may vnderstand me
But nightingale so may they not done the
For thou hast many a nice queint crie
I haue the herde saine, ocy ocy
Howe might I know what that should be

Ay foole (quod she) wost thou not what it is
When that I say, ocy ocy ywys
Than meane I that I would wondre faine
That al they were shamfully yslaine
That meanen ought againe loue amis

And also I would that al tho had the dede
That thinke not in loue her life to lede
For who so ye wol not the God of loue serue
I dare wel say he is worthy to sterue
And for that thil, ocy ocy I grede

Eye (quod the cuckow) this is a queint lawe
That euery wight shal loue or de to drawe
But I forsake al soche company
For myne entent is not for to die
Ne neuer while I liue on loues yoke to draw

For louers ben the folke that ben on lyue
That moost disease haue, & moost vnthriue
And most endure sorow, wo and care
And lest selen of welfare
What nedeth it ayenst trouth to striue

What (quod she) thou art out of thy minde
How might thou in thy churlenesse fynde
To speake of loues seruauntes in this wise
For in this world is none so good seruice
To euery wight that gentle is of kinde

For therof truly commeth al goodnesse
Al honour and al gentlenesse
Worship, ease, and al hertes lust
Parfite ioye, and ful assured trust
Jolytie, pleasaunce and freshenesse

Lowlyhed, largesse, and curtesye
Semelyhed, and trew company
Drede of shame for to done amys
For he that truly loues seruaunt is
Were lother be shamed than to die

And that thys is sothe that I sey
In that beleue I wil liue and dey
And cuckow so I rede that thou do ywis
Than (quod he) let me neuer haue blisse
Yf euer I vnto that counsaile obey

Nyghtingale thou spekest wondre faire
But for al that is the soth contrayre
For loue is in yonge folke but rage
And in olde folke a great dotage
Who most it vseth most shal enpaire

For therof commeth disease and heuinesse
Sorow & care and many a great sikenesse
Despite, debate, angre and enuy
Deprauing, shame, vntrust and ielousie
Pride, mischefe, pouertie and wodnesse

Louing is an office of dispaire
And one thing is therin that is not faire
For who that getteth of loue a litle blisse

But

But if he be alwaie therewith iwis
He maie full sone of age haue his paire.

And Nightingale therefore hold thee nie
For leue me well, for all thy queint crie
If thou be ferre or long fro thy make
Thou shalt be as other that been forsake
And then thou shalt hoten as doe I.

Fie (q she) on thy name and on thee
The God of Loue ne let thee neuer ithee
For thou art worse a thousandfold thā wood
For many one is full worthie and full good
That had be naught ne had loue ibee.

For euermore loue his seruauntes amendeth
And from all euill taches hem defendeth
And maketh hem to brenne right in a fire
In trouthe and in worshipfull desire
And whē him liketh, ioy inough hem sendeth

Thou Nightingale he saied, be still
For loue haue no reason, but it is will
For oft tyme vntrue folke he easeth
And true folke so bitterly he displeaseth
That for defaute of courage he let hem spill.

Then tooke I of the Nightingale kepe
How she cast a sigh out of her depe
And saied, alas that euer I was borne
I can fortene not saie one worde more
And right with ẏ worde she brast out to wepe

Alas (q she) my harte woll to breake
To hearen thus this leude birde speake
Of loue, and of his worshipfull seruice
Now God of loue thou helpe me in some wise
That I maie on this Cuckowe been awreke

Me thought then he sterte vp anon
And glad was I that he was agon
And euermore the Cuckowe as he flaie
Saied farewell, farewell Popingaie
As though he had scorned me alone.

And then came the Nightingale to me
And saied, frende forsoth I thanke thee
That thou hast liked me to rescowe
And one auowe to loue make I now
That all this Maie I woll thy singer be

I thanked her, and was right well apaied
Ye (q she) and be thou not dismaied
Tho thou haue heard the Cuckowe erst thā me
For if I liue it shall amended be
The next Maie, if I be not affrated.

And one thing I woll rede thee also
Ne leue thou not the Cuckowe his loues so
For all that he hath saied is strong fealyng
Naie (q I) thereto shall nothing me bring
For loue and it hath doe me moche wo.

Ye, vse (q she) this medicine
Euery daie this Maie or thou dine
Go looke vpon the freshe Daisie
And though thou be for wo in poinct to die
That shall full greatly lessen thee of thy pine

And loke alwaie that thou be good and true
And I woll sing one of the longes newe
For loue of thee, as loude as I maie crie
And then she began this song full hie
I shrewe all hem that been of loue vntrue.

And when she had song it to the ende
Now farewell (q she) for I mote wende
And god of loue, that can right well and may
As moche ioye sende thee this daie
As any yet louer he euer sende.

Thus taketh ẏ Nightingale her leaue of me
I praie to God alwaie with her be
And ioye of loue he sende her euermore
And shilde vs fro the Cuckowe and his lore
For there is not so false a birde as he.

For the she flewe the gentill Nightingle
To all the birdes that were in that dale
And gate hem all into a place in fere
And besoughten hem that they would here
Her disease, and thus began her tale.

The Cuckowe, well it is not for to hide
How the Cuckowe and I last haue chide
Euer sithen it was daie light
I praie you all that ye doe me right
Of that foule false vnkinde bride

Then speake o birde for all by one assent
This matter asketh good auisement
For we been birdes here in fere
And sothe it is, the Cuckowe is not here
And therefore we woll haue a parliment.

And thereat shall the Egle be our Lorde
And other peres that been of recorde
And the Cuckowe shall be after sent
There shall be yeue the iudgement
Or els we shall finally make accorde.

And this shall be without naie
The morowe after sainct Valentines daie
Under a Maple that is faire and grene
Before the chamber windowe of the quene
At Wodstocke vpon the grene laie.

She thanked hem, and then her leaue toke
And into an Hauthorne by that broke
And there she sate and song vpon that tree
Terme of life loue hath with holde me
So loude that I with that song awoke,

Explicit.

O Leude booke w thy foule rudenesse
Sithe thus haste neither beautie ne eloquence
Who hath thee caused or yeue thee hardinesse
For to appere in my Ladies presence
I am ful siker thou knowest her beniuolence
Full agreable to all her abiyng
For of all good she is the best liuyng.

Alas that thou ne haddest worthinesse
To shewe to her some pleasaunt sentence
Sith that she hath through her gentillesse
Accepted the seruaunt to her digne reuerence
O, me repenteth that I ne had science
And leiser als, to make the more florishyng
For of all good she is the best liuyng.

Beseche her mekely with all lowlinesse
Though I be ferre from her in absence
To thinke on my trouth to her & stedfastnesse
And to abridge of my sorowes the violence
Which caused is, wherof knoweth your sapience
She like emōg to notifie me her liuing
For of all good she is the best liuing,

Lenuoye.

Aurore of gladnesse, and daie of Lustinesse
Lucerne a night with heauenlie influence
Illumined, rote of beautie and goodnesse
Suspires whiche I effunde in scilence
Of grace I beseche aledge let your writyng
Now of all good, sith ye be best liuyng.

Explicit.

Scogan, vnto

the Lordes and Gentilmen of the Kinges house.

My noble soonnes and eke my lordes dere
I your father called vnworthelie
Sende vnto you this litle treatise here
Written with mine owne hande full rudelie
Although it be that I not reuerentlie
Haue written to your estates, I you praie
Myne vnconnyng taketh beniglie
For Goddes sake, and herken what I saie.

I complain me sore when I remembre me
The sodain age that is vpon me fall
But more I complain my mispent iuuentute
The whiche is impossible ayen for to call
But certainly the moste complaint of all
Is to thinke that I haue be so nice
That I ne would vertues to me call
In all my youth, but vices aie cherice.

Of whiche I aske mercie of the Lorde
That art almightie God in maiestie
Besekyng to make so euen accorde
Betwixt thee and my soule that vanitie
Worldlie lust, ne blinde prosperitie
Haue no lordship ouer my fleshe to frele
Thou Lorde of reste and perfite vnitie
Put fro me vice, and kepe my soule hele.

And yeue me might while I haue life & space
Me to confirme fully to thy pleasaunce
Shewe to me thabundaunce of thy grace
And in good werkes graunt me perseueraūce
Of all my youth forget the ignoraunce
Yeue me good will to serue thee aie to queme
Set all my life after thyne ordinaunce
And able me to mercie or thou deme.

My lordes dere, why I this complaint write
To you whom I loue moste entirely
Is for to warne you as I can endite
That tyme loste in youth folily
Greueth a wight bodily and ghostly
I meane hym that to luste and vice entende
Wherefore lordes I praie you specially
Your youth in vertue shapeth to dispende.

Plante

Plante the roote of youth in soche a wise
That in vertue your growyng be alwaie
Loone alwaie goodnesse be in your exercise
That shall you mightie maie at eche assaie
The fende to withstande at eche affraie
Passeth wisely this perillous pilgrimage
Thinke on this worde, & werke it euery daie
That shall you yeue a parfite floured age.

Taketh also hede how ỹ these noble clerkes
Writen in her bookes of greate sapience
Saiyng that faith is ded withouten werkes
And right so is estate with negligence
Of vertue, and therefore with diligence
Shapeth of vertue so to plante the roote
That ye there of haue full experience
To worshyp of your life and soules boote.

Taketh also hede that lordshyp ne estate
Without vertue maie not long endure
Thinketh ehe how vices and vertue at debate
Haue been & shal while the worlde maie dure
And euer the vicious by auenture
Is ouerthrowe, and thinketh euermore
That God is Lorde of all vertue, and figure
Of all goodnesse, and therfore folowe his lore

My maister Chaucer, God his soule saue
That in his langage was so curious
He said that the father whiche is ded & graue
Biqueth nothing his vertue with his hous
Unto his children, and therefore labourous
Ought ye be, beseeyng God of grace
To yeue you might for to be vertuous
Through whiche ye might haue parte of his (place

Here maie ye see that vertuous noblesse
Cometh not to you by waie of auncestrie
But it cometh by lefull businesse
Of honest life, and not by slogardrie
Wherefore in youth I rede you edifie
The house of vertue in soche a manere
That in your age maie you kepe and gie
Fro the tempest of worldes wawes here.

Thinketh how betwixe vertue and estate
There is a parfite blessed Mariage
Vertue is cause of peace, vice of debate
In mannes soule, the which be full of corage
Cherisheth them vertue, vices to outrage
Driueth hem away, let hem haue no wōning
In your soules, leseth not the heritage
Whiche God hath yeue to vertuous liuyng.

Take hede also how men of poore degre
Through vertue haue be set in great honour
And euer haue liued in greate prosperitie
Through cherishyng of vertuous labour
Thinketh also how many a gouernour
Called to estate hath be set full lowe
Through misulyng of right and of errour
And therfore I counsaile you vertue to know

Thus by your aūcestors ye maie nothing clai-
As ỹ my maister Chaucer saieth expresse (me
But tēporal thing, ỹ men may hurt or maime
Then is God stocke of vertuous noblesse
And sithe that he is lorde of blissednesse
And made vs all, and for vs all deide
Followeth hym in vertue with full businesse
And of this thing herke how my maister seide

The first stocke father of gentilnesse
What man that claimeth gentill for to be
Must folowe his trace, & all his wittes dresse
Vertue to looke, and vices for to flie
For vnto vertue longeth dignitie
And not the reuers sikely dare I deme
All weare he mitre, corowne, or Diademe.

The first stocke was full of right wisenesse
True of his worde, sobre, pitous, and free
Cleane of his ghost, and loued businesse
Ayenst the vice of slothe in honestee
And but his heire loue vertue as did he
He is not gentill though he riche seme
All weare he mitre, croune, or Diademe.

Vice maie be an heire to olde richesse
But there maie no man, all men maie see
Biqueth his heire his vertuous noblesse
That is appropried vnto no degree
But to the first father of Maiestie
That maketh his heires hem ỹ cā him queme
All weare he mitre, croune, or Diademe.

Lo heare this noble Poete of Bretaine
How lightlie in vertuous sentence
The losse on youth of vertue can complain
Therefore I praie you with your diligence
For your profite and Goddes reuerence
Tempereth fully vertue in your mynde
That when ye come to your iudges presence
Ye be not vertuelesse then behinde.

Many lordes haue a maner now a daies
Though one shewe hym a vertuous mattere
Her feruent youth is of so false alaies
That of that arte thei haue no ioye to here
But as a ship that is without a stere

Driueth

To the lordes and gentilmen.

Driueth vp and doun without gouernaunce
Wenyng that calme would laste yere by yere
Right so fare thei for very ignoraunce.

For verie shame knowe thei not by reason
that after an eb there cometh a flood ful rage
In thesame wise whē youth passeth his seaō
Cometh croked and vnweldie palled age
And sone after comen the Kalendes of dotage
And if ꝑ her youth haue no vertue prouided
All men woll saie fie on her vassalage
Thus hath her sloth fro worshipe hem deuided

Boecius the clerk, as men maie rede and se
Saieth in his booke of Consolacion
what man desireth of vine or tree
Plenteous fruict in reapyng season
Must euer eschue to doe oppression
vnto the roote while it is yong and grene
Thus maie ye see well by that inclusion
That youth vertuelesse doeth moche tene.
Now seeth there ayenst how vertuous nobles-(nesse
Rooted in youth with good parseueraunce
Driueth awaie all vices and wretchednesse
As slogardrie, riote, and distaunce
Seeth eke how vertue causeth suffisaunce
Seeth eke how vertue voideth all vice
And who so hath vertue, hath al habundaūce
Of wele, as ferre as reason can deuise.

Taketh hede of Tullius Hostilius
That fro pouert came to high degree
Through vertue, redeth eke of Julius
The conquerour, how poore a man was he
Yet through his vertue and his humilitee
Of many countrey had he in gouernaunce
Thus vertue bringeth a man to great degree
Eche wight that lust to do hym entendaunce

Rede here ayenst now of Nero Vertulees
Taketh hede also of proude Balthasare
Thei hated vertue, equitie and pees
And looke how Antiochus fill fro his chare
That he his shin and bones all to tare
Loke what mischaunce thei had for her vices
who so woll not by these signes beware
I dare well saie infortunate and nice is.

I can no more now saie, but hereby maie ye se
How vertue causeth perfite siker nesse
And vices exilen all prosperitee
The best is eche man to chose as I gesse
Doeth as you list, I me excuse expresse
I would be right sorie if that ye mischese
God confirme you in vertuous noblesse
So that through negligence ye not it lese.

Explicit.

Somtyme the worlde so stedfast
was and stable
That mannes woorde was an
Obligacioun
And now it is so false and dis-
ceiuable
That worde and deede as in conclusioun
Is nothyng like, for tourned is vp so doun
All the worlde, through mede and sikelnesse
That all is lost for lacke of stedfastnesse.

What maketh the worlde to be so variable
But lust that men haue in discension
For emong vs a man is holde vnable
But if he can by some collusion
Doe his neighbour wrong and oppression
What causeth this but wilfull wretchednesse
That all is lost for lacke of stedfastnesse.

Trouthe is put doune, reason is holde fable
Vertue hath now no dominacion
Pitie is exiled, no man is mersiable
Through couetise is blente discrecion
The worlde hath made a permutacion
Fro right to wrong, fro trouthe to sikelnesse
That is all lost for lacke of stedfastnesse.

Lenuoye.

Prince desire to be honourable
Cherishe thy folke, and hate extorcion
Suffre nothyng that maie be reprouable
To thine estate doen in thy region
Shewe forthe the yerde of castigacion
Drede God, do law, loue trouth & worthines
And wedde thy folke ayen to stedfastnesse.

Explicit.

Good counsaile of Chaucer.

Flie fro the prease and
dwell with sothfastnesse
Suffise vnto thy good
though it bee small
For horde hath hate, and
climbyng tikelnesse
Prease hath enuie, & wele
it blent ouer all
Sauour no more then thee behoue shall
Rede well thy self that other folke canst rede
And

And trouthe thee shall deliuer it is no drede.

Paine thee not eche croked to redresse
In trust of her that tourneth as a balle
Greate rest standeth in litle busines
Beware also to spurne again a nalle
Strive not as doeth a crosse with a walle
Deme thy self that demest others dede
And trouthe thee shall deliuer it is no drede.

That thee is sent receive in buxomnesse
The wrastlyng of this worlde asketh a fall
Here is no home, here is but wildernesse
Forthe pilgrim, forthe beast out of thy stall
Looke vp on high and thanke God of all
Weive thy lyste and let thy ghost thee lede
And trouthe thee shall deliuer it is no drede.

Explicit.

Balade of the

village without paintyng.

Plaintike to Fortune.

His wretched worldes
translmutacion
As weale and wo, nowe
poore and now honour
Without order or due discrecion
Gouerned is by fortunes
errour
But natheless the lacke of her fauour
Ne maie not doe me lyng though that I die
I'ay tout pardu mon temps & labour
For finally fortune I defie.

Yet is me left the light of my reasoun
To knowe frende fro foe in thy mirrour
So mocke hath yet thy tourning vp & doun
Itaught me to knowen in an hour
But truly no force of thy reddour
To hym that ouer hymself hath maistrie
My sufficiaunce shal be my succour
For finally fortune I defie

O Socrates thou stedfast champion
She might neuer be thy turmentour
Thou neuer dreddest her oppression
Ne in her chere founde thou no fauour
Thou knewe the disceipt of her colour
And that her moste worship is for to lie
I knowe her eke a false dissimulour
For finally fortune I defie

The answere of Fortune.

No man is wretched but hymself it weene
He that hath hymself hath sufficiaunce
Why saiest thou then I am to thee so keene
That hast thy self out of my gouernaunce
Saie thus, grauntmercie of thin habūdance
That ỹ hast lent or this, thou shalt not strive
What wost thou yet how I thee woll auaunce
And eke thou hast thy best frende a liue.

I haue thee taught deuision betweene
Frende of effecte, and frende of countenaunce
Thee nedeth not the galle of an hine
That cureth iyen darke for her penaunce
Now seest thou clere that wer in ignoraunce
yet holt thine anker, & yet thou maiest ariue
There bountie beareth ỹ key of my substaūce
And eke thou hast thy best frende a liue.

How many haue I refused to sustene
Sith I haue thee fostred in thy pleasaunce
Wolt thou then make a statute on thy quene
That I shall be aie at thine ordinaunce
Thou borne art in my reigne of variaunce
Aboute the whele with other must thou drive
My lore is bet, then wiche is thy greuaunce
And eke thou hast thy best frende a liue.

The answere to Fortune.

Thy lore I dampne, it is aduersitie
My frend maist thou not reue blind goddesse
That I thy frendes knowe I thanke it thee
Take hem again, let hem go lie a presse
The nigardes in hepyng her richesse
Pronostike is thou wolt her toure assaile
Wiche appetite cometh aie before sicknesse
In generall this rule maie not faile.

Fortune.

Thou pinchest at my mutabilitie
For I thee lent a droppe of my richesse
And now my liketh to withdrawe me
Why shouldest thou my roialtie oppresse
The sea maie ebbe and flowe more and lesse
The welkē hath mist to shene, rain, and haile
Right so must I kithe my brotilnesse
In generall this rule maie not faile

The plaintife.

Lo, the execucion of the maiestie
That all purueigheth of his rightwisenesse
That same thyng fortune clepen ye
Ye blinde beastes full of leudnesse
The heauen hath propertie of sibernesse
This worlde hath euer restlesse trauaile
The last daie is ende of myne entresse
In generall this rule maie not faile

Thenuoie of Fortune.

Princes I praie you of your gentilnesse
Let not this man and me thus crie and plain
And I shall quite you this businesse
And if ye liste releue hym of his pain
Praie ye his best frende of his noblesse
That to some better state he maie attain.

Lenuoye.

O broken been the statutes hie in heauen
That create were eternally tendure
Sith that I see the bright Goddes seuen
Mowe wepe and waile, and passion endure
As maie in yearth a mortall creature
Alas, fro whens maie this thyng procede
Of whiche errour I die almoste for drede.

By worde eterne whilom was it shape
That fro the fifth cercle in no manere
Ne might of teares doune escape
But now so wepeth Venus in her sphere
That with her teares she wold drench vs here
Alas Scogan this is for thine offence
Thou causest this deluge of pestilence.

Hast thou not saied in blaspheme of ỹ goddis
Through pride, or through gret thy rebelnes
Soche thinges as in ỹ law of loue forbode is
That for thy ladie sawe not thy distresse
Therefore thou yaue her vp at Wighelmesse
Alas Scogan of olde folke ne yong
Was neuer erst Scogan blamed for his tong

Thou drewe in scorne Cupide ebe to recorde
Of thilke rebell worde that thou hast spoken
For whiche he wol no lenger be thy Lorde
And Scogan, though his bowe be not broken
He woll not with his arowes be i wroken
On thee ne me, ne none of our figure
We shall of hym haue neither hurte ne cure.

Now certes frende I drede of thine vnhappe,
Lest for thy gilte the wreche of loue procede
On all hem that been hore and round of shap
That bee so likely folke to spede
Then we shall of our labour haue our mede
But well I wot thou wolt answere and saie
Lo olde Grisell list to renne and plaie

Naie Scogan saie not so, for I me excuse
God helpe me so, in no rime doubtles
Ne thinke I neuer of slepe wake my muse
That rusteth in my sheath still in pees
While I was yong I put her forthe in prees
But al shall passe that men prose or rime
That euery man his tourne as for his tyme.

Scogan thou kneelest at the stremes hedde
Of grace, of all honour, and of worthinesse
In thende of whiche I am dull as dedde
Forgotten in solitarie wildernesse
Yet Scogan thinke on Tullius kindenesse
Wyne thy frende there it maie fructifie
Farwell, and lose thou neuer eft loue defie.

Explicit.

O soothe kyng, rule thee by Sapience
Bishoppe be able to minister doctrine
Lorde to true counsale yeue audience
Womanhode to chastitie euer encline
Knight let thy deedes worship determine
Be rightous Judge in sauyng thy name
Rich do almose, lest thou lese blisse & shame

People obeie your kyng and the lawe
Age be ruled by good religion
True seruaunt be dredfull & kepe ỹ vnder awe
And thou poore lie on presumpcion
Inobedience to youth is vtter destruccion
Remember you how God hath set you so
And doe your parte as ye be ordained to.

Chaucer to his emptie purse.

O you my purse and to none other wight
Complain I, for ye be my ladie dere
I am sorie now that ye be light
For certes ye now make me heauie chere

We

We were as lefe be laide vpon a bere
For whiche vnto your mercy thus I crie
Be heuy againe or els mote I die

Nowe vouchsafe this day or it be night
That I of you the blisful sowne may here
Or se your colour lyke the sonne bright
That of pelonesse had neuer pere
ye be my life, ye be my hertes stere
Quene of comfort and of good companye
Be heuy againe, or els mote I die

Nowe purse that art to me my lyues light
And sauyour, as downe in this worde here
Out of this towne helpe me by your might
Sithe that you wol not be my treloure
For I am shaue as nighe as any frere
But I pray vnto your curtelye
Be heuy againe, or els mote I die.

Explicit.

Chaucer vnto the kinge.

O conquerour of Brutes Albion
Whiche that by lyne and fre election
Ben very kinge, this to you I sende
And ye that may al harmes amende
Haue minde vpon my supplication.

Explicit.

A balade of good

counseile translated out of Latin verses in to Englishe, by dan Ihon lidgat cleped the monke of Buri.

Onsyder well euery circumstance
Of what estate euer thou bee
Riche, stronge, or myghty of puissaunce
Prudent or wyse, discret or besy
The dome of folkes in soth thou may nat flie
What euer thou dost trust wel this
A wicked tonge wol alway deme amis

For in thy porte or in thine apparaile
If thou be cladde and honestly be saine
Amone the people of malice wol not faile
Without aduice or reason for to saine
That thin array is made or wrought in vain
Suffre hem speake, and trust right wel this
A wicked tonge wol alway deme amis

Thou wil to kinges be equipolent
With great lordes euin and peregal
And if thou be to torne and al to rent
Than wol they say, and iangle ouer al
Thou art a flongarde that neuer thriue shal
Suffre hem spekе, and trust right wel this
A wycked tonge wol alway deme amis

If it befal that thou take a wife
They wol faully say in their entent
Thou art likely euer to lyue in strife
Voide of al rest, without aledgement
mines ben maistres, this is their iudgement
Suffren al their speche, & trust right wel this
A wicked tonge wol alway deme amis

If thou be faire and excellent of beaute
yet wol they say that thou art amourous
If thou be foule and vglie on to se
They wol affirme that thou art vicious
The people of langage is so dispitous
Suffre al their speche, & trusts right wel this
A wicked tonge wol alway deme amis

If so be that of parfitenesse
Thou hast vowed to liue in chastite
Than wol folke, of thy persone expresse
Thou art impotent tengendre in thy degre
And thus wher thou be chaste or dessaue
Suffre hem speake, and trust right wel this
A wicked tonge wol alway deme amis

If thou be fatte other corpulent
Than wol thein say thou arte a great gloten
A deuourer, or els vinolent
yf thou be leane or megre of fashion
Cal the a nygarde in their opinion
Suffre them speke, and trust right wel this
A wicked tonge wol alway dem amis

If thou be riche, some wol yeue the laude
And say it cometh of prudent gouernaunce
And some wol sain it cometh of fraude
Other by sleght, or falle chenisaunce
To sain the worst, folke haue so gret plesaunce
What suffre hem say, and trust right wel this
A wycked tonge wol alway deme amis

If thou be sadde or sobre of countenaunce

When woll sayn thou thinkest some treason
And if thou be gladde of daliaunce
When wol deme it desolucion
And call faire speche adulacion
Yet let him speake, and trust right well this
A wicked tonge wol alway deme amis

Who that is holy by perfection
When of malice wol clip him ypocrite
And who is mery of clene entention
When sain in riot he doth hym delite (white
Some mourne in black, some loue in clothes
Suffre men speke, & trust right wel this
A wicked tonge wol alway deme amis

Honest araie men deme it pompe and pride
And who goeth poore, men cal him a waster
And who goeth still men marke him on ẏ syde
Seine that he is a spie or agiler
Who wasteth not men sain he hath treasoure
Wherof conclude and trust right wel this
A wycked tonge wol alway deme amis

Who speketh moche men clepeth him prudēt
Who that debateth, men sain that he is hardi
And who saith litel with great sentement
Some folke yet wol wite him of folie
Trouth is put downe, and vp goth flattery
And who ẏ list plainly knowe ẏ cause of this
A wycked tonge wol alway deme amis

For though a man were as pacient
As was Dauid throw his humilite
Or with Salomon in wisdome as prudent
Or in knighode egale with Josue
Or manly proued, as Judas Machabe
Yet for al that, trust right wel this
A wicked tonge wol alway deme amis

And though a man had the prowesse
Of worthy Hector, Troies champion
The loue of Troylus, or the kindnesse
Or of Cesar the famous high renoun
With al Alisaunders dominacioun
Yet for al that trust right wel this
A wicked tonge wol alway deme amis

Or thoughe a man of high or lowe degre
Of Tulius had the sugred eloquence
Or of Seneca the moralite
Or of Caton forsight and prouidence
The cōquest of Charles, Artures magnificēce
Yet for al that trust right wel this
A wicked tonge wol alway deme amis

Touching of women, the parfit Innocence
Thoughe that they hade, of Hester ẏ noblesse
Or of Grelilde, the humble pacience
Or of Judith, the preuid stabelnesse
Or Polixenes virginal clennesse
Yet dare I seine, and trust right wel this
Some wiked tong, wold deme of them amis

The wifely trouth of Penelope
Though they it had in her possession
Helenes beautie, the kindnesse of Medee
The loue vnfained of Martia Caton
Or Alcestes trewe affection
Yet dare I sain and trust right wel this
A wicked tonge wol alway deme amis

Than seuth it that no man maye eschewe
The swerde of tonges, but it wil kerue & bite
Ful harde it is a man for to remewe
Out of their daunger him for to aquite
Wo to the tonges that hem selfe delite
To hinder or sclaūder, & set their study in this
And their plesaunces to deme alwaye amis

Moste noble princes, cherishers of vertue
Remembreth you of high discretion
The first vertue moste pleasing to Jesu
(By the writing and sentence of Caton)
Is a good tonge in his opinion
Chastice the reuerse of wisdome do this
Woideth your hearinge frō al that deme amis

❧ A balade in the

Praise and commendacion of maister Geffray Chauser, for his golden eloquence.

Maister Geffray chauser, that now lithe in graue
The noble Rhetoricion, and Poet of great Bretaine
Tha worthy was, the laurer of Poetry to haue
For this his labour, and the palme to atteine
Whiche first made, to distil, and reine,
The gold dewe dropes, of speche and eloquēce
In to englisch tong, through his excelence

Explicit.

Here foloweth certaine Wooz- Fol.cccxl.

kes of Geffray Chauſer, whiche hath not here tofore been
printed, and are gathered and added to this
booke by Iohn Stowe.

A balade made by Chaucer, teching what
is gentilnes, oz whom is wozthy
to be caied gentil.

THe firſte ſtoke father of gentilnes
What man deſireth gentill foz to be
Muſt folowe his trace, & all his wittes dzeis
Uertue to loue, and vicis foz to flee
Foz vnto vertue longeth dignitee
And not the reuers ſadly dare I deme
Al were he miter crowne oz diademe

This firſt ſtoke was full of right wiſnes
Trew of his wozde, ſober pitous and free
Clene of his goſte and loued beſineſſe
Againſt the vice of ſlouth in honeſte
And but his eyze loue vertue as did he
He is not gentyl though he riche ſeme
All weare he miter, crowne oz diademe

Uicelle may wel be eyze to olde richeſſe
But ther may no man, as men may well ſee
By quethe his eire his vertues nobleſſe
That is appzopzied vnto no degree
But to the firſt father in maieſtee
That maketh his eyzes them that is queme
Al were he miter, crowne oz diademe.

Explicit.

A Prouerbe againſt couitiſe and negligence.

WHat ſhal thes clothes thus manifolde
Lo this hote ſomers daye
After grete heate cometh colde
No man caſte his pilche awaye
Of al this wozld the large compaſſe
It wil not in myne armes tweine
Who ſo moſel wol enbzace
Litell ther of he ſhall diſtreine

Explicit.

A balade whiche Chaucer made againſt
women vnconſtaunt

MAdame foz your newfangleneſſe
Many a ſeruaunt haue ye put out of your grace
I take my leue of youre vnſtedfaſtneſſe
Foz well I wote, while ye to liue haue ſpace
Ye can not loue full halfe yere in a place
To newe thinges, your luſte is eure bene
In ſtede of blew, thus may ye weare al grene

Right as a mirour ꝑ nothing may enpzeſſe
But lightli as it cometh, ſo mote it paſſe (nes
So fareth your loue, your wozdes beren̄ wit
Ther is no faithe, may youre herte enbzace
But as a wedercok, that turneth his face
With euery winde, ye fare and that is ſene
In ſtede of blew, thus may ye weare al grene

Ye might be ſhrined, foz your bzotilneſſe
Better than Dalyda, Creſſeide, oz Candace
Foz euer in chaũging ſtondeth your ſikernes
That tatche may no wight, from your hert a (race
If ye loſe one, can wel tweine purchace
Al light foz ſomar, ye wot wel what I mene
In ſtede of blewe, thus may ye were al grene

Explicit.

Here foloweth a balade whiche Chaucer
made in ꝑ pzaiſe, oz rather diſpzaiſe,
of women foz ther doublenes.

THis wozld is full of variaunce
In euerye thinge who taketh hede
That faithe and truſte, and alſ conſtance
Exiled ben this is no dzede
And ſaue only, in womanhed
I can ſee, no ſikernes
But foz al that, yet as I rede
Be ware alwaye, of doublenes

Alſo that freſhe, ſomer floures
White and rede, blewe and grene
Ben ſodenly, with winter ſhours

Wade feinte and fade, without weue
That truft is none as ye may fene
In no thing, nor no ftedfaftenes
Except in women, thus I meue
Yet aye beware, of doublenes

The croked Mone, this is no tale
Some while iwene, and bright of hewe
And after that, ful derke and pale
And euery moneth, chaungeth newe
That who the verap, fothe knew
Al thinge is bilt, on brotlenes
Saue that women, aye be trewe
Yet aye beware of doublenes

The lufty freffhe, fommers daye
And Phebus, with his beames clere
Towardes night, they drawe awaye
And non lenger, like appere
That in this preferite, life now here
Nothinge abieth, in his fairenes
Saue women aye, be found intere
And deuoide of doublenes

The fee eke, with his ftierne wawes
Eche daye floweth new againe
And by concours, of his lawes
The ebbe floweth in certeine
After grete drought, ther cometh a raine
That farewel here al ftabelnes
Saue that women, be hole and pleine
Yet aye beware, of doblenes

Fortunes whele, goeth round aboute
A thouland times, daye and nighte
Whofe cours ftandeth, euer in doute
For to tranfmew, fhe is fo lighte
For whiche aduerteth in your fight
The vntruft, of worldely tikelnes
Saue women, whiche of kindely right
Ne hath now teche of doublenes

What man may, the wind reftreine
Or holde a fnake, by the taile
Or aflipper elle conftreine
That it will voide, with out faile
Or who can driue fo auaile
To make fuere new fongelnes
Saue women that can gie their faile
To row their, boote with doublenes

At euery hauene, they can ariue
Wher as they wote, is good paffage
Of innocence they can not ftriue
With wawes, nor no roches rage
So happy is their lodemanage
With nedle and ftone, their cours to dreffe
That Salomon, was not fo fage
To finde in them, no doublenes

Therfore who fo them accufe
Of any double entencion
To fpeake rowme, other to mufe
To pinch at their condicion
All is but falfe collufion
I dare right wel, the fothe expreffe
They haue no better protection
But fhroud them, vnder doublenes

So wel fortuned is their chaunce
The dice to turne, vppe fo doune
With fife and finche, they can auaunce
And than, by reuolucion
They fet a fel conclufion
Of lombes, as in fothfaftenes
Though clerkes make mencion
Their kinde is fret with doublenes

Sampfon had experience
That women were ful trew ifound
Whan Dalyda, of innocence
With cheeres, gan his heere to round
To fpeake alfo of Rofamounde
And Cleopatris, feithfulnes
The ftories plainly, wil confounde
Men that apeche their doublenes

Sengle thinge, ne is not praifed
Nor ofolde is of no renoun
In balaunce whan they be peifed
For lacke of waighte they be bore doune
And for this cauſe of iuſte reaſon
Thefe women al of right wifenes
Of chois and fre election
Moft loue elchaunge & doublenes

Lenuoye.

O Ye women whiche been enclined
By influence of your nature
To been as pure, as golde y-fined
In your truth, for to endure
Arme your felfe, in ftrong armure
Leſt men aſſaile, your ſikernes
Set on your breſt, your felf to aſſure
A mightie fhelde of doublenes

Explicit.

This

This werke folowinge was compiled by Chaucer and is caled the craft of louers.

MOralis a symylytude who list their balades sewe
The craft of louers curious argumentes
For som bin false and som ben founden trewe
And som bin double of entendements
Thus louers with ther moral documents
And eloquent langage they can examplifye
The craft of loue what it doth signifie

who list vnto this Balades haue inspeccion
Thinke that loues lordshipes excellente
Is remedy for dysease & correccion
To wofull harte and body impotente
Suppose the maker that he be negligente
In his compilinge holde him excusable
Because his spirites be sory and lamentable

Most souerain lady surmosting your nobel-
O intenuate Jenipre and daili delicious(nes
My trust mine helth my cordial foundresse
O Medicine sanatife to sores langorous
O comfortable creature of louers amorous
O excellente herber of louely countenaunce
Ye regester my loue in your remembraunce

Certes sir your peinted eloquence
So gay so freshe and eke so talcatife
It doth transcende the wit of dame Prudẽce
For to declare your thought or to discriue
So gloriously glad langage ye contriue
Of your conseite your thought & your entẽte
I wilbe ware for drede or I be shent

O rubicunde Rose, and white as the lyly
O clarified Christal, of worldy portraiture
O Courtin figure, resplendent with glory
O Geme of beaute, o Carboucle shining pure
Your fairnes excedeth ỹ craft of dame nature
Most womãli behauing your louely coũtena
Ye regestar my loue in your remẽbraũce(unce

what auailleth sir, your proclamacion
Of curious talking, not touchinge to sadnes
It it but winde, flatering and adulacion
Immesurable thought, of worldy wildnes
Whiche is chief cause, of gostly feblines
Your wil your thought, your double entẽde-
I will be ware of drede, or I be shent (ment

My witte my thought and myne entencion
Is for to please you my lady soueraine
And for your loue throw many a region
I would be exiled so that ye wold not disdein
To haue pity on me when I compleine
In wel and wo to suffre perturbaunce
So that ye wol haue me in remembraunce

What is your wil plainly ye doe expresse
That maketh this curious suplicacion
Sey on sir on hertly tenderesse
Beth wel aduised of beine delectacion
At your beginning think on the terminaciõ
Passe not your boundes be not to negligente
And euer beware for dred sir or ye be shente

Your goodly behauing your beaute & counte
Maketh me incline to do you reuerẽce (naũce
Your louely lokig your glorious gouernaũce
Ouercometh my spirites my wit & my pru-
Som drop of grace, of your magnificẽce (dẽce
Unto your seruaunt ye shewe attendaunce
And regester my loue in your remembraunce

O cõberous thought of mannes fragilite
O feruente wil of lustes furious
O cruel corage caulinge aduersite
Of womens corrupcion and eke contrariouse
Remember man what chaunge is perilous
To breke ỹ birginite of birgines innocente
Wherfore beware mankinde or thou be shent

My peine is preuy impossible to deserue
My lamentabel thoughtes by casting mour-
O general Juge Jesu sitting superne (ninge
Graciously cõuerte ỹ loue of my swete thing
O amiable lady gracious and beningne
I put me holy in your gouernaunce
Exile me not out of your remembraunce

Me semeth by langage ye be some potestate
Or els som curious gloser discreuable
What is your name mekely I make regrate
Or of what science or craft commendable
I am a lady excellente, and honorable
He must be gay that should be to min entente
Wherfore I wil be ware or I be shent

Lorde God this is a sharpe eranimacion
Of her that is most in my memorie
Unto you lady I make certification
My name is trew loue of cardnal delidery
Of mannes copulacion the verye exemplary
Which am one of your seruaũtes of pleasaũce
I must be chefe called to remembraunce

Certaine Balades,

I haue sought true loue of yeres gret proces
Yet fond I neuer loue but for a season
Some men be diuerse & know no gentilnes
And some lacke both wisdome and reson
In som men is trust and som men is treason
Wherfore I wil conclude by auysemente
And euer beware for drede that I be shente

The rectour Tullius so gay of eloquence
And Ouide ỹ sheweth the craft of loue expres
With habundaunce of Salomons prudence
And pulcritude of Absalons faireneſſe
And I wer possessed with Jobs great richesse
Manly as Sãpsone my persone to auaunce
Yet shuld I submit me in your remẽbraunce

Now sir yf that it please your nobelnesse
To gyue aduertence to my question
What thinge is pleasure of swetnesse
And is most bitter in final succession
Or what thinge geueth man occasion
In tender age for to be concupiscent
Resolue this question or drede sir ye be shent

My soueraigne lady, Ouide in his writinge
Saith that desire of worldly concupiscence
As for a time is swete in his worchinge
And in his ende he causeth greate offẽce
Notwithstandinge my lady dame Prudence
Grene flowring age & manly countenaunce
Causeth ladies to haue it in remembraunce

Your goodly answer so notable in substaũce
Wold cause the hert of womanhede conuerte
Vnto delyte of natural pleasaunce
But of one thinge I wold faine be experte
Why mennes lãgage wol procure & trãsuerte
The wil of women & virgines innocente
Wherfore I am afeerd or I be shente

Let neuer the loue of true loue be losed
My soueraine lady in no maner wise
In your confidẽce my wordes I haue closed
My amyable loue to you I doe promise
So that ye knit the knot of exercyse
Both locke and key ye haue in gouernaunce
Emprint my loue in your remembraunce

O very trust and I were certefied
The plain entention of your hartes cordial
Me semeth in blisse than were I glorified
Vnto your plesure I would be at your call
But euer I feare of chaunces casual
Of fraude, disceipte, and langage insolente
Then were I sure maidenhed should be shent

Ther was neuer tresour of terrestiall richesse
Nor precious stones reherced innumerabell
To be of cõparison vnto your hight goodnes
Abone al creatures to me most amiable
Trust not ỹ cõtrary I was neuer disceuabell
Kepe wel true loue forge no dissemblaunce
And graciously take me to your remẽbraũce

Me semeth by feiture of womanly properte
Ye shuld be trusty and trewe of comprymis
I finde in your no false duplicite
Wherfore true loue ye haue myer I wis
And euermore shal endure so haue I blis
The federasy made with good auisement
God graunt grace that nother of vs be shent

Whan Phebus freshe was in chare splendẽte
In the moneth of Maye erly in amorninge
I hard two louers profer this argumente
In the yere of our lorde a .M. by reheninge
CCCXL. & VIII. yere folowing
Oportent princesse conserue true louers al
And graunt them thy region & blisse celestial

& Explicit the craft of louers.

A Balade.

Of their nature they greatly thẽ delite
With holy face feined for the nones
In saintwarie their frendes to visite
More for reliques than for saintes bones
Though they be closed vnder precious stones
To gete them pardon lyke their olde vsages
To kisse no shrines but lusty quike Images

Whã maidẽs ar wedded & houshold haue take
Al their humility is exiled awaye
And the cruel hartes beginneth to awake
They do al the besy cure ỹ they can or maye
To ber ther husholdes maisters ỹ soth for to
Wherfore ye yõg men I rede you for thy saye
Beware alwaye the blind eateth many flye

Of this mater I dare make no lenger relatiõ
For in defaut of slepe my spirites werẽ fainte
In my studie I haue had so lõg an habitaciõ
That my body & my gost are greuously attaint
And therfore of this proces I mak no lẽger cõpt
But whether ỹ ỹ blind eate flesh or fish (plaint
I pray God kepe the fly out of my dishe.

Now

Now I make an ende, I laie me doune to rest
For I knowe by experience veramente
If maidens and wiues knewe and wist
Who made the matter he should be shent
Wherefore I praie God omnipotente
Hym saue and kepe bothe night and daie
Written in the lustie season of Maie.

Explicit.

The.x. Commaundementes of Loue.

Certes sorre extendeth yet my reason
This matter as yet should be to discriue
But I truste your grace will in this season
Conlider howe with con=nyng that I striue
For in his fauour could I neuer arriue
Eloquence this Balade hath in great despite
The maker lacketh maner to endite.

Of Loues cõmaundemetes. x. is the nomber
As afterward shall rudely be rehearsed
And louers in no wise departe a sunder
Where as thei be obserued and redressed
Daunger and vnkindnes been oppressed
And that is commaunded this to make
As your owne all other to forsake.

Faithe.

Faithe is the first and principally to tell
Uerie loue requireth suche credence
That eche beleue other as true as the Gospel
Without adlaucion or flatteryng audience
In true demeanyng and trustie confidence
Paint not your cõnyng with colour ne fable
For then your loue must nedes be vnstable.

Entencion.

In the seconde to treate of Entencion
Your louer to please doe your busie cure
For as myn author Romance maketh mẽciõ
Without entent your loue maie not endure
As women will thereof I am right sure
Endeuour with harte, will, and thought
To please hym onely & her loue hath sought.

Discrecion.

In your dealyng euer be discrete
Set not your loue there as it shall be losed
Aduertise in your minde whether he be mete
That vnto hym your harte maie be disclosed
And after as you finde hym then disposed
Point by discresion your hour, time, & place
Conueniently methyng Warmes to embrace.

Pacience.

Of these cõmaundements, the. iiii. is pacĩce
though by irous corage your louer be meued
With soft wordes and humble obedience
His wrathe maie sone be swaged and releued
And thus his loue obteined and acheued
Will in you roote, with greater diligence
Bicause of your meke and womanly pacĩce.

Secretnesse.

Secretlie behaue you in your werkes
In shewing coũtenãce or meuyng of your eye
Though soche behauor to some folk be darke
He that hath loued will it sone aspie
Thus your self your counsaill maie descrie
Make priuy to your deling as few as ye maie
For. iii. may kepe a counsel if twain be awaie

Prudence.

Let prudẽce be gouernor of your bridel reine
Set not your loue in so feruent wise
But that in goodly hast ye maie refreine
If your louer list you to dispise
Romaũce min auctour wold you this aduise
Ty slacke your loue for if ye doe not so
That wanton list will tourne you into wo.

Perseueraunce.

Stablishe your loue in so stedfast wise
If that ye thinke your louer will be true
As entirely as you can deuise
Loue hym onely, and refuse all newe
Then shall not your worship chaũge his hew
For certes masteres, then is he to blame
But if that he will quite you with the same.

Pitie.

Be piteous to hym as womãhod requireth
That for your loue endureth paines smarte
Whom so sore your pleasaunt looke enfireth
That printed is your beautie in his harte
And wounded lieth without knife or darte

There let your pitie spred without restreinte
For lacke of pitie, let not your seruaunt feint

Measure.

Take mesure in your talkyng be not outrage
For this rehearseth Romance de la Rose
A man endued with plenteous langage
Oft tyme is denied his purpose
Take measure in langage wisedome in grose
For measure as right wel proued is by reason
Thynges vnseasonable setteth in season.

Mercie.

Soche daunger exile hym vtterly
Ouer all mercie to occupie his place
To piteous complaintes your eares applie
And receiue your seruaunte in grace
To hym that bounde is in loues lace
Shewe fauour ladie and be not merciles
Lest ye be called a common murderes.

Lenuoye.

When ye vnto this balade haue inspection
In my makyng holde me excusable
It is submitted vnto your correccion
Consider that my connyng is disable
To write to you the figure vniable
All deuoide of connyng and experience
Maner of indityng, reason and eloquence.

Trust it well the maker your owne
You to obeie whyle his life maie endure
To doe you seruice as a man vnknowne
No guerdone desiryng of yearthly treasure
But if it might accorde with your pleasure
For true seruice hym to auaunce
And call hym into your remembraunce.

¶ Explicit the .x. commaundementes of Loue.

The .ix. Ladies worthie.

Quene Sinope.

Rofulgent in precioulnes
O Sinope the quene
Of all feminine bearynge
the scepter and regalie
Subduyng ỹ large coũtrie
of ermonie as it was sene
Maugre their mightes ỹ
brought them to applie
thin honor to encrese, thy power to magnifie
O renoumed Hercules wt al thy pōpous bolle
This princes tooke ỹ prisoner & put to flighte (thyne host

Ladie Ipolite.

(spake of Ipolit
yet Hercules wered red for shame, when I
chief patrones & captain of ỹ people of sinope
which wt amorous chere & coragious might
She smote thee to ground for all thy crueltie
wherfore ỹ dukeship of Diamedes & dignitie
vnto her great lande and glorie perpetuall
Attributed is with triumphe Laureall.

Ladie Daifele.

The noble triumphe of this Ladie Daifile
In releue & succor of ỹ great duke of Athenes
She chastised & brought into perpetual exile
The aureat citezeins of mightie Thebes
The strong brasen pillers there had no reles
But she wt her sister Argife thē did doune cast
And with furious fire the citee brent at last.

Ladie Tuca.

O pulchrior sole in beautie full lucident
Of all femine moste formous flour
In italy reignig wt great cheualry rizt fermēt
Chastised ỹ romains as maistres & cōquerour
O lady Tuca moche was thy glorie & honour
yet moch more was to cōmēde thy benignite
In thy perfite liuing and virginall chastitie.

Quene Pantasile.

O ye Logeans for this noble quene Pātasile
Sorowe her mortalitie wt dolorous cōpassion
Her loue was to you so pregnante and fertile
That against ỹ proude Grekes made defensiō
with her victorius hand was al her affeccion
To lashe ỹ Grekes to ground wt her harts ioie
To reuēge ỹ coward death of Hector of Troie

Quene Thamarus.

O ỹ rigorous quene Thamarus inuincible
Upon ỹ strong & hideous people of citees reiwhiche by thy power & wittes sensible (ning
Thou tokest in battaile Siron the great king
Of Perce and Mede his hed of in blood lyng
Thou badest him drinke ỹ blood had thursted
And .xxii. M. of his hoste there were distressed

Ladie Lampado.

The

The famous trumpe of gold forged so bright
Hath blowen so vp the fame & glory enuiron
Of this lady Lampido with her sister Masisi
that al ỹ land of Feminie, Europe & Epheson
Be yelden and applied lowly to her subiecciõ
Many an high toure she raised, & bilt toures
Perpetuelly to last wᵗʰ huge walles strõg (lõg

Quene Semeramus.

Lo here Semeramus quene of great Babilon
Moste generous gem & floure of louely fauor
whose excellẽt power frõ mede vnto septẽtriõ
Florished ĩ her regally as a mightie cõqueror
Subdued al Barbary & zorast ỹ king of honor
She slue Ethiop & cõquered Ermonie ĩ Inde
In which non entred but Alexãder & she as I (finde.

Ladie Menalip.

Also the ladie Menalip thy sister dere
Whose merciall power no man coud wtstande
Thyough the worlde was not found her pere
The famous duke Thesus she had in hande
She chastised hym and all his lande
The proude Grekes mightelie she did assaile
Ouercame and vanquished them in battaile

Explicit the balades of the.ix. worthies of Ladies.

My truthe so plain
Is take in vain
And greate disdain
} In remembraunce.

Yet I full faine
Would me cõplaine
We to abstaine
} From this penaunce.

But in substaunce
None allegeaunce
Of my greuaunce
} Can I not finde.

Right so my chaūce
With displeasaunce
Doeth me auaunce.
} And thus an ende.

Explicit.

A Ballade.

IN the season of Feuerere
when it was full colde
Froste and Snowe, Haile
Raine, hath domination
With chaungable elementes, & windes manifolde
Whiche hath grouñ floure
& herbe vnder iurisdicciõ
For a tyme to dispose after their correction
And yet Aprill with his pleasaunt shoures
Dissolueth ỹ snow, & bringeth forthe his flou-
(res.
Of whose inuencion ye louers maie be glade
For thei bring in the Kalendes of Maie
And ye wᵗʰ countenaunce demure mete & sad
Owe for to worship, ỹ lustie floures alwaie
And in especiall one is called see of the daie
The Daise a floure white and rede
And in Frenche called Labele Margarete

O commendable floure and moste in minde
O floure and gracious of excellence
O amiable Margarite, exalted of natife kinde
Vnto whõ I must resort, with all my diligẽce
With hart will & thought, wᵗʰ most lowly obedi-
I to be your seruaunt, & ye my regent (ence
For life ne death, neuer to repent.

Of this processe, now forth will I procede
Whiche happeth me with greate disdain
As for the time thereof I take lest hede
For vnto me was brought the sore paine
Therfore my cause was the more to cõplainẽ
yet vnto me my greuaunce was the lesse
That I was so nigh my ladie and maistresse.

Ther-

All lone walkyng
In thought plainyng
And sore sighyng
} All desolate.

Ye remembryng
Of my liuyng
My death wishyng.
} Bothe early and late.

Infortunate
Is so my fate
That wote ye what
} Out of measure.

My life I hate
Thus desperate
In soche poor estate
} Doe I endure

Of other cure
Am I not sure
Thus to endure
} Is hard certain.

Suche is my bre
I you ensure
What creature
} Maie haue more pain

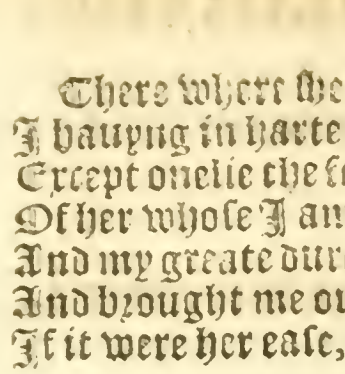
There where she was present in this place
I bauyng in harte greate aduersitee
Except onelie the fortune and good grace
Of her whose I am she whiche releued me
And my greate dures vnlased hath she
And brought me out of ỹ fearfull greuaunce
If it were her ease, it were to me pleasaunce.

As for the whiche wo I did endure
It was to me a verie pleasaunt pain
Seyng it was for that faire creature
Whiche is my Ladie and souerain
In whose presence I would be pasyng fain
So that I wist it were her pleasure
For she is from all distaunce my protectour.

Though vnto me dredfull were the chaunce
No maner of gentilnes oweth me to blame
For I had leuer suffer of death the penaunce
Thã she should for me haue dishonor or shame
Or in any wise lose a drop of her good name
So wisely God for his endelesse mercie (die.
Graũt euery true louer, to haue ioy of his la-

Explicit.

A Ballade.



Mercifull and o merciable
Kyng of Kynges, and father of pitee
Whose might and mercie is insomperable
O prince eterne, O mightie Lorde late we
To whom mercie is giuen of propertie
On thy seruaunt that lieth in prison bounde
Haue thou mercie or that his harte wounde.

And ỹ thou wilt graunt to him thy prisoner
Free libertie, and lose hym out of pain
All his desires, and all his heauie chere
To all gladnesse thei were restored again
Thy high vẽgeance, why should ỹ not refrain
And shewe mercie, sith he is penitent
Now helpe hym lorde, and let him not be shẽt

But sith it is so, there is a trespas done
Unto mercie let yelde the trespassour
It is her office to redresse it sone
For trespasse to mercie is a merrour
And like as the swete, hath the price by soure
So by trespasse, mercie hath all her might
Without trespasse, mercie hath lacke of light

What should Philike doe but if sikenes were
What nedeth salue, but if there were sore
What needeth drink, wher thirst hath no power
What should mercie doe, but trespas goe afore
But trespas be, mercie woll be little store
Without trespas neuer execusion
Haie mercie haue ne chief perfection.

The cause at this tyme of my writyng
And touchyng mercie to whom I make mone
Is for feare lest my soueraigne and swetyng,
I meane her that louelier is none
With me is displeased for causes more thã one
What causes thei be that knoweth God & she
But so do not I alas it forthinketh me.

What se she in me, what defaute or offence
What haue I doe that she on me disdaine
How might I doe come to her presence
To tell my complaint whereof I were faine
I drede to looke, to speake, or to complaine
To her that hath my harte euery deale
So help me God I would al thing wer weale

For in this case came I neuer or now
In loues daunce so ferre in the trace
For with myne ease, scape I ne mow
Out of this daunger except her good grace
For though my countenaunce be mery in her
As semeth to her by worde or by chere (face
Yet her good grace setteth myne harte nere.

And if that my soueraine haue any meruaile
Why I to her now and afore wrote
She maie well thinke it is no great trauaile
To him that is in loue brought so hote
It is a limple tree, ỹ falleth with one stroke
That meane I, though ỹ my souerain toforn
We hath denied, yet grace may come to morn
(ought

But maistres for ỹ good will ỹ I haue you
And euermore shall as long as my life dureth
Pitie your seruant & kepe him in your thought
And giue him som cõfort or medicin & cureth
His seruent ague, that encreaseth ỹ renueth
So greuous ben his paines & his sighes sore
That wout your mercy, his dais be al for lore

Go little bill, go forth and hie thee fast
And recommande me, and excuse me as ỹ can
For very feblenesse, thus am I at the last
My pen is worn, my hew is pale and wan
My yen been sonken, disfigured like no man
Till death his dart, that causeth for to smart
my corps haue cõsumed, thẽ farwel swet hart

O doughter of Phebus in vertuous apparēce
My loue elect in my remembraunce
My carefull harte distreined cause of absence
Till ye meinprise me release my greuaunce
Upon you is set my life and myne attendance
Without recure I wis vntill
Ye graunt true harte to haue his will.

Thus my dere swetyng in atraunce I doe lye
And shal til sum drops of pitie frō you spring
I meane your mercie that lieth my harte nye
That me maie reioice, & cause me for to syng
These termes of loue, lo I haue won the ring
My goodly mastres thus of her good grace
God graūt his blisse in heauē to haue a place.

Explicit.

Here foloweth how Mercurie with Pallas, Venus, and Minarua, appered to Paris of Troie, be slepyng by a fountain.

Pallas loquitur ad Parisum de Troie.

SOnne of Priamus gentill Paris of Troie
Wake of thy slepe, beholde vs Goddesses three
Wee haue brought to thee encrease of ioye
To thy discresion reportyng our beautie
Take here this Appell and well aduise thee
Whiche of vs is fairest in thy sight
And giue thou it, we praie thee gentil knight

Pallas loquitur primo.

If so be thou giue it vnto me Parise
This shall I giue vnto thy worthines
Honour, conquest, nobley, lose and prise
Victorie, courage, force and hardines
Good auenture, and famous manlines
For that apple all this giue I to thee
Consider this Parise, and giue it vnto me.

Venus loquitur ad Parisum.

Naie giue it me, and this I shall you giue
Glad aspecte with fauour and fairnes
And loue of ladies also while that ye liue
Famous stature, and princely semelines
Accordyng to your natife gentilnes
Understande this gift well I you aduise
And giue it me hardly Parise.

Minerua loquitur ad Parisum.

Ye ye Parise take hede vnto me
Thou art a prince borne by discente
And for to rule thy royall dignitee
I shall thee giue first in tendemente
Discrecion, prudence in right iudgemente
Whiche in a prince, is thing most couenable
Giue it me I am to haue it able.

Explicit.

A balade pleasaunte.

I Haue a Ladie where so she bee
That seldome is she soueraine of my thought
On whose beautie, when I beholde and see
Remēbryng me how well she is wrought
I thanke fortune that to her grace me brouzt
So faire is she but nothyng angelike
Her beautie is to none other like.

For hardely and she were made of brasse
Face and all, she hath enough fairnesse
Her iyen been holow, and grene as any grasse
And Rauinish yelowe is her sounitresse
Thereto she hath of euery comelinesse
Soche quantitie giuen her by nature
That with the least she is of her stature.

And as a bolt her browes been ibent
And betill browed she is also with all
And of her witte as simple and innocent
As is a childe that can no good at all
She is not thicke, her stature is but small
Her fingers been little, and nothyng long
Her skin is smothe as any Oxes tong.

Thereto she is so wise in daliaunce
And beset her wordes so womanly
That her to here it doeth me displeasaunce
For that she saieth, is saied so connyngly
That when there be mo then she and I
I had leuer she were of talkyng still
Then that she should so goodlie speache spill

And slothe none shall haue in her entresse
So diligent is she and vertulesse
And so busie aie all good to vndresse
That as a she Ape she is harmelesse
And as an Harnet meke and pitelesse

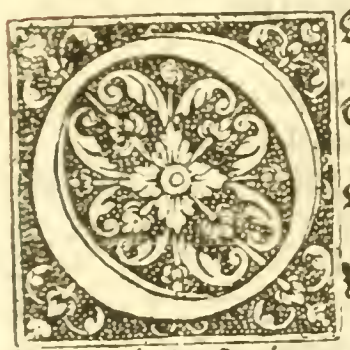
with that she is so wise and circumspecte
That prudence none her folie can infecte.

Is it not ioye that soche one of her age
Within the boundes of so greate tenderneſſe
Should in her werke be so sadde and sage
That of the weddyng sawe all the nobleſſe
Of quene Jane, and was tho as I gesse
But of the age of yeres ten and siue
I trowe there are not many soche aliue.

For as Jesu my sinfull soule saue
There nis creature in all this worlde liuyng
Like vnto her that I would gladly haue
So pleaseth mine hart ỹ goodly swete thyng
Whose soule in haste vnto his blis bryng
That first her formed, to be a creature
For were she well, of me I did no cure.

¶ Explicit the discriuyng
of a faire Ladie.

An other Balade.



Wollie Quince hangyng
by your stalke
The whiche no man dare
pluche awaie nor take
Of all the folke that passe
for by or walke
Your floures freshe be fal-
len awaie and shake
I am right sorie maistresse for your sake
Ye seme a thyng that all men haue forgoten
Ye be so ripe ye waxe almoste roten.

Your vglie chere deinous and froward
Your grene yen frownyng and not glad
Your chekes enbolned like a melowe Costard
Colour of Orenge your brestes Satournad
Gilt vpon warantise the colour wil not fade
Bawsin buttocked belied like a tonne
Men crie I. Barbary at ỹ losing of your gõne

Wy louely leude maistres take consideracion
I am so sorowfull there as ye be absent
The floure of ỹ barkfate ỹ foulest of al ỹ naciõ
To loue you but a little is myne entent (gẽt
The swert hath I swent you ỹ smoke hath you
I trow ye haue been laid vpõ some hill to drie
You do me so moch worship there as ye be pre-
Of al womẽ I loue you best a m. times sie. (sẽt

Explicit.

A balade, warnyng men to beware of deceitptfull women.

Oke well aboute ye that
louers bee
Let not your lustes leade
you to dotage
Be not enamoured on all
thynges that ye see
Sampson the sorte and
Salomon the sage
Deceiued were for all their greate courage
Men deme it right that thei se with ye
Beware therfore the blind eateth many a flie

I mean of women for all their cheres queint
Trust thẽ not to moch their truth is but gea-
The fairest outward wel can thei paint (son
Their sted fastnesse endureth but a season
For thei saine frendlines and worchẽ treason
And for thei are chaungable naturally
Beware therfore the blinde eateth many flie

what wight on liue trusteth on their cheres
Shall haue at last his guerdon and his mede
For women can shaue nerer then rasours or
All is not gold ỹ shineth men take hede (cheres
Their galle is hid vnder a sugred wede
It is but queint their fantasie to aspie
Beware therfore the blind eateth many a flie

Though all the worlde doe his busie cure
To make women stande in stablenesse
It would not be it is against nature
The worlde is doe when thei lacke doublenes
For thei can laugh & loue not this is expresse
To trust on them it is but fantasie
Beware therfore the blind eateth many a flie

Women of kinde, hath condicions three
The first is, thei be full of disseite
To spinne also, is their propertie
And women a wonderfull conseite
For thei can wepe oft, and all is a sleite
And euer when thei list, the tere is in the ye
Beware therfore, the blind eateth many a flie

In soth to saie, though all the yerth so wãne
Were parchement smoth, white and scribabell
And the great sea, that called is the Occiane
Were tourned into ynke blacker then Sabell
Euery sticke a pen, eche man, a scriuener abel
Not could thei write, womans trecherie
Beware therfore, the blind eateth many a flie

Explicit.

These

¶ These verses next

folowing were compiled by Geffray Chauser and in the writen copies foloweth at the ende of the complainte of petee.

The long nyghtes when euery reature
Suld haue their rest in sō what as by kind
Or elles ne may their life not longe endure
It falleth moste in to my woful minde
How I so farre haue brought my self behind
That safe the death ther may nothing me lise
So dispaired I am from al blisse

This same thought me lasteth til the morow
And from the morowe forth, til it be eue
There nedeth me no care, for to borow
For both I haue good laiser an good leue
There is no wight that will my wo byreue
To wepe enough and wailen al my fyll
The sore sparke of peine now doth me spil

This loue that hath me set in soche aplace
That my desire wil neuer fulfyl
For neither Pite, Mercy, neither Grace
Can I not find, and yet my sorowful harte
For to be dede I can it not arace
The more I loue the more she doth me smarte
Thorow whiche I se withoute remedie
That from the deth I may no wise astarte

Now sothly what she hight I wol reherse
Her name is Bountie, set in womanhed
Sadnes in youth, and Beautie pridlesse
And Plesaunce, vnder Gouernaunce & drede
Her fur name is eke faire Ruthelesse
The wise eknit vnto good Auenture
That for I loue her, she sleth me giltlesse
Her loue I best, and shal while I may dure

Bett than my selfe a hundred thousād dele
Than al this worldes riches or creature
Now hath not loue me bestowed wel
To loue there I neuer shal haue parte
Alas right thus, is turned me the whel
Thus am I slaine with loues fury darte
I can but loue her best my swete so
Loue hath me taught no more of his arte
But serue al waye and stint for no wo

In my trwe careful harte ther is
So moche wo and so litel blisse
That wo is me that euer I was bore
For al that thinge whiche I desire I misse
And al that euer I wolde not I wisse
That finde I redy to me euer more
And of al this I not to whome me plaine
For she that might me out of this bring
Ne recheth nought whether I wepe or sing
So litel ruth, hath she vpon my paine

Alas whan slepinge tyme si lo then I wake
Whan I shuld dauce for fere lo than I quake
This heuy life I lede lo for your sake
Though ye therof in no wise heed take
Mynt hartes lady, and hole my liues quene
Fore ruly durst I say as that I fel
My semeth that your swete harte of stele
Is whetted now against me to kene

My dere harte, and best beloued fo
Why lyketh you to do me al this wo;
What haue I don, that greueth you or saide
But for I serue and loue you and no mo
And whilest I liue I wil euer do so
And therfore swete, ne bethe not euel apaide
For so good and so faire as ye be
It wer right greet wonder but ye had
Of al seruauntes both of good and badde
And best worthy of al them I am he

But neuer the lesse my righte lady swete
Though that I be vnkonninge and vnmete
To serue as I coud best, aye your highnes
Yet is ther none fainer that would I hete
Than I to do your ease or els bete
What so I wist that were to your highnes
And had I might as good as I haue wil
Than shuld ye fele wher it were so or none
For in this world liuinge than is ther none
That fainer wolde your hartes wil fulfil

For both I loue and eke drede you so sore
And algates mote and haue don you ful yore
That better loued is non ne neuer shal
And yet I would beseche you of no more
But loueth wel and be not wroth therfore
And let me serue you forth lo this is al
For I am nought so hardy ne so wode
For to desire that ye should loue me
For wel I wotte elas that may not be
I am so litel worthy and ye so good
For ye be one the worthiest on liue

And I the most vnlikely for to thriue

yet for al this weteth ye right wel
That ye ne should me frō your seruyce driue
That I ne wil aye, with al my wites liue
Serue you truly what wo so that I fele
For I am set so hy vpon your whele
That though ye neuer wil vpon me rewe
I must you loue and bene euer as trewe
As any man can or maye on liue

But the more that I loue you goodly swete
The lasse finde I that ye loue me
Alas whan shal that hard wit amende
Wher is now al your womanly pete
Your gentelnes and your debonarte
Wil ye nothinge therof vpon me spend
And so hole swete as I am yours all
And so great wil as I haue you to serue
Now certes, and ye let me thus starue
Yet haue ye wonne theron but small

For at my knowing I do nought why
And thus I wilbe seche you hartely
That euer ye finde whiles ye liue
A truer seruaunte to you than am I
Leueth than and sleath me hardely
And I my death to you wil al forgiue
And yf ye finde no trewer verely
Woll ye suffer than that I thus spil
And for no maner gilt but my good will
As good were than vntrue as true to be.

Explicit.

A balade declaring that wemens chastite
Doeth moche excel all treasure worldly.

IN womanhede as auctours al write
Most thing cōmended is their chaste honeste
Thing most slaunderous their nobles to atwite
As when women of hasty fraelte
Exceden the bondes, of wikely chastite
For what auaileth lynage or rial blood
When of their lyuing, the report is not good.

The holy bed, defoiled of mariage
For ones defoiled, may not recouered be
The vice goth forth, & the froward langage
By many a realme, and many a greate cite
Slaunder hath a custome, and that is greate
True or fals, by a contrarious soune (pite
Ones areised it goth not lyghtly downe

For when a lechour by force or by mastry
Defouled hath, of virgins the clennes
Widous oppressed, and lye in aduoutry
Assailed wiues that stode in stablenes (dresse
Who may then, their slaunderous harme re-
When their good name, is hurt by soch report
For same lost ones, can neuer haue his resort

A thefe may robbe a man of this richesse
And by some meane, make restitucion
And some man maye, dysherit and oppresse
A poore man, from his possession
And after make againe satisfaccion
But no man may restore, in no degree
A maide robbed, of her virginite

A man may also, bete I castel doune
And bilde it after more freshe to the sight
Exile a man, out of his regionne
And him reuoke whether it be wrōg or right
But no man hath the pour, ne the might
For to restore, the palace virginal
Of chastite, when broken is the wal.

Men may also, put out of seruice
And officers remeue, out of their place
And at a day, when fortune list deuise
They may again, restored be to grace
But their nis time, nother let me space
Nor neuer in story, neither rad me sain
That maydenhode lost, recouered was again

For whiche men should, haue a conscience
Rewe in their hert, and repent sore
And haue remorce of great offence
To rauishe thing, which they may not restore
For it is said, and hath be saide ful yore
The emerand grene, of parfite chastite
Stole ones away, may not recouered be

And hard it is, to rauishe A tresour
Whiche of nature, it is not recuparable
Lordship may not of Kinge nor Emperour
Reforme a thinge, whiche is nat reformable
Rust of defame is inseperable
And maidenhode lost of newe or yore
No man of liue may it again restore

Romans olde thorough their pacience
Suffered tyrauntes in their tyrannyes
And their cites, to do great violence
The people to oppresse, with their roberies
But to punishe, they set great espies

On false auouterers as it is wel couth
Widowes to rauish, & maidens in their youth
Explicit.

The Court

of Loue.

With temerous herte, and trẽbling hand of drede
Of cũning naked, bare of eloquence
Unto the flour of poort in womanhede
I write as he that none intelligence
Of metres hath, ne floures of sentence
Saue that me lift my writing to conuey
In that I can to please her heigh nobley

The blosomes fresh, of Tulius gardein soote
Present then not, my matter for to borne
Poemes of Uirgile taken here no roote
Ne crafte of Galfride may not her soiourne
Why nam I cunning o wel maie I morne
For lacke of science, that I can nat write
Unto the princes of my lyfe a right

No termes digne vnto her excellence
So is she spronge of noble stripe and high
A world of honour and of reuerence
There is in her, this wil I testifie
Caliope thou sister wise and sly
And thou Minerua guide me with thy grace
That langage rude, my matter not deface

Thy suger dropes swete of elicon
Distil in me thou gentle muse I praye
And the Melpomene I cal anone
Of ignoraunce the mist to chace awaye
And geue me gace so for to write and saie
That she my lady of her worthinesse
Accept in gree this litel short tretesse

That is entittled thus the Courte of Loue
In ye that ben Metriciens me excuse
I you beseche for Uenus sake aboue
For what I meane in this ye nede not muse
And if so be my lady it refuse
For lake of ornate speche I wolde be wo
That I presume to her to writen so

But my entente and al my busie cure
Is for to to write this tretesse as I can
Unto my lady stable true and sure
Faithful and kind sith first that she began
We to accept in seruice as her man
To her be al the pleasure of this booke
That when her like she may it rede and looke

When I was yong at .xviii.
yere of age
Lusty and light, desirous
of plesaunce
Approching on full sadde
and ripe corage
Loue arted me to do my
obseruaunce
To his estate and done him obeisaunce
Commaundinge me the Court of Loue to see
Alite beside the mounte of Citharee

Their Citherea goddesse was and quene
Honoured highly for her maieste
And eke her sonne the mighty God I wene
Cupide the blind that for his dignite
A. M. louers worshipp on their kne
There was I bid in paine of death to pere
By Mercury the winged messengere

So than I went by strange & ferre countrees
Enquiringe aye what coastes that it drewe
The Court of Loue and thiderward as bees
At last I se the people gan pursue (knew
Anõ me thought some wight was ther that
Where that the court was holden ferre or nie
And after than ful faste I ganne me hie

Anon as I them ouer toke I said
Heile frendes whether purpose ye to wend
For loch (q one) that answered lyche amaid
To Loues Courte, now goo we gentel frend
Where is that place (q I) my felowe hend
At Citheron sir said he withoute doute
The kinge of Loue and al his noble route

Dwelling within a castel rially
So than a pace I iourned forth amonge
And as he saide, so fond I there truly
For I beheelde the toures high and stronge
And high pinacles large of hight and longe
With plate of golde be spred on euery side
And precious stones, ỹ stone werke for to hide

No Saphire Inde no Rube riche of price
There lacked than nor Emeraude so grene
Bales Turkes, ne thinge to my deuise
That may the castel maken for to shene
All was as bright as sterres in winter bene
And Phebus shone to make his peace ageine

For trespas done to high estates tweine

Venus and Mars the God & goddesse clere
When he them founde in armes cheined faste
Venus was than ful sad of harte and chere
But Phebus beames streight as is the masse
Upon the castle ginneth he to cast
To please the lady princes of that place
In signe he looketh after loues grace

For ther nis God in heuen or hel I wys
But he hath ben right soget vnto loue
Joue Pluto or what so euer he is
Ne creature in erth or yet aboue
Of these the reuers may no wight approue
But furthermore the castell to descrie
Yet sawe I neuer none so large and hie.

For vnto heuen it stretcheth I suppose
With in and oute depeinted wonderly
With many a thousand daisy rede as rose
And white also this sawe I verely
But what tho deises might do signifye
Can I not tel sause that the quenes floure
Alceste it was that kept ther her soioure

which vnder Venus lady was and quene
And Admete kyng and souerain of that place
To whom obeied the ladies good.xix.
With many a thousand other bright of face
And youg men fele came forthwith lusti pace
And aged eke their homage to dispose
But what they were I coud not well disclose

Yet nere and nere forth in I gan me dresse
Into an halle of noble apparaile
with arras spred and cloth of gold I gesse
And other like of eyer auaile
Under the cloth of their estate sauns faile
The king and quene there sat as I beheld
It palled ioye of Helise the feld

Their saintes haue their cominge & resorte
To seen the kinge so rially be seen
In purple clad and eke the quene in sorte
And on their heddes sawe I crounes tweine
With stones fret so that it was no paine
Withouten meate and drinke to stand and se
The kinges honor and the rialtee

And for to treate of states with the king
That ben of counsell cheife & with the quene
The king had Daunger nere to him standing
The quene of loue Disdain and that was sen
For by the faith I shal to God I wene
was neuer straunger in her degre
Than was the quene in castinge of her eye

And as I stode perceiuing her aparte
And eke the beames shininge of her eyen
Me thought they were shapen lyche a darte
Sharpe and persinge smale & streight as line
And al her haere it shone as gold so fine
Wischiuil crispe doune hanging at her backe
Ayard in length and southely than I spake

O bright regina who made the so faire
Who made thy colour vermelet and white
Wher wōneth ȳ God, how far aboue the eyre
Greate was his crafte & great was his delite
Now maruel I nothing that ye do bight
The quene of loue and occupie the place
Of Cithare now swete lady thy grace

In mewet spake I so that nought astarte
By no condicion word that might be hard
But in my inward thought I gan aduerte
And oft I said my wit is dul and hard
For with her beautie thus God wot I ferde
As doeth the man ymauished with sight
When I beheld her cristal iyen so bright

No respecte hauyng what was beste to done
Till right anone beholding here and there
I spied a frend of myne and that ful sone
A gentel woman was the chamberere
Unto the quene that hote as ye shall here
Philobone that loued al her life
whan she me sey she led me forth as blife

And me demaunded how and in what wise
I thither come, and what my erand was
To sene the Courte (ȳ I) and al the guise
And eke to sue for pardon and for grace
And mercy aske for al my great trespasse
That I none erste come to the courte of loue
For yeue me this ye goddes al aboue

That is wel said (ȳ Philobone) in dede
But were ye not allomoned to appere
By Mercurius for that is al my drede
yes gentill feire (ȳ I) now am I here
ye yet what tho though that be true my dere
Of your fre wil ye shuld haue come vnsente
For ye did not I deme ye will be shente

For ye that reigne in youth and lustines
Pampired with ease and ialous in your age
Your duetie is as far as I can gesse
To loues courte to dressen your biage

Allone

Assone as nature maketh you so sage
That ye may know a woman from a swan
Or whan your foote is growen halfe a span

But sithe that ye be wilful negligence
This xviii. yere hath kepte your selfe at large
The greater is your trespas and offence
And in your necke you mote bere all ẏ charge
For better wer ye ben withouten barge
Amidde the sea in tempest and in rayne
Then biden here receiuing wo and pain

That ordeined is for soche as them absente
Fro loues courte by yeres long and fele
I ley my life ye shal ful sone repente
For loue wil reiue youre coloure lust and hele
Eke ye must baite an many on heuy mele
No force iwis I stired you longe a gon
To drawe to courte (ꝙ litel) Philobon

Ye shal wel se how rough and angry face
The king of Loue wil shewe when ye him se
By myn aduise knele down & aske him grace
Eschewing perel and aduersite
For wel I wot it wolle none other be
Comforte is none ne councel to youre ease
Why wil ye then the king of Loue displease

O mercie God (ꝙ iche) I me repent
Caitif and wretche in hert, in wil & thought
And after this shal be mine hole entent
To serue & please howe dere ẏ loue be bought
Yet sith I haue mine owne penaũce isought
With humble sprite shal I it receiue
Though that ẏ king of Loue my lyfe bereiue

And though that feruent loues qualite
In me did neuer worche truly yet I
With al obeisaunce and humilite
And benigne harte shal serue him til I die
And he that lord of mightes greate and hie
Right as him list me chastice and correcte
And punishe me with trespace thus enfecte

These wordes said, she caught me by the lap
And led me furth in til a temple round
Large and wide and as my blessed hap
And good auenture was right sone I founde
A tabernacle reised from the grounde
Where Venus sat and Cupide by her side
Yet half for drede I can my visage hide

And eft againe I loked and behelde
Seing ful sundry people in the place
And mister folke & som that might not welde
There limes wele me thought a woũder case

The tẽple shone with windowes al of glasse
Bright as the day with manie a faire ymage
And there I see the freshe quene of Cartage

Dido that brent her beautie for the loue
Of fals Eneas and the weimenting
Of her Anelida true as Turtil doue
To Arcite fals and there was inpeinting
Of many a prince and many a doughty king
Whose marterdõ was shewed about ẏ walles
And how that fele for loue had suffred falles

But sore I was abasshed and astonied
Of al tho folke that there were in that tide
And than I asked where they had woned
In diuers courtes (ꝙ she) here beside
In sondry clothing mantilwise full wide
They were arraied and did their sacrifice
Unto the God and goddesse in their guise

To yonder folke (ꝙ she) that knele in blewe
They weare the colour ay and euer shal
In signe they were and euer wil be true
Withouten chaunge and southely yonder all
That ben in blak with mourning crie & call
Unto the goddes for their loues bene
Some ferre, som dede, som al to sherpe & kene

Yea than (ꝙ I) what done these prestes here
Nonnes and Hermites Freres and all tho
That sit in white in russet and in grene
For sothe (ꝙ she) they wailen of their wo
O mercy lord may they so come and go
Frely to court and haue soche libertie
Yea men of eche condicion and degree

And women eke for truly there is none
Excepcion made ne neuer was ne may
This courte is ope and free for euerichone
The king of loue he wil not say them nay
He taketh al, in poore or riche array
That mekely sewe vnto his excellence
With al their harte and al their reuerence

And walking thus aboute with Philobone
I se where come a messengere in hie (anone
Streight from the king whiche let cõmaũde
Throughout the courte to make an ho & crie
A new come folke abide, and wote ye why
The kinges luste is for to seen youe sone
Come nere let se, his wil mote nede be done

Than gan I me present to fore the king
Trembling for fere with visage pale of hewe
And many alouer with me was kneling
Abashed sore til vnto the tyme they knewe

The sentence yeue of his entent full trew
And at the last the king hath me behold
With sterne visage & seid what doth this olde

Thus ferre I stope in yeres come so late
Unto the courte for sothe my liege (q I)
An hundred tyme I haue ben at the gate
A fore thus tyme yet coude I neuer espie
Or myne acqueintaunce eny is mine ye
And shamefastenes away me ganne to chace
But now I me submitte vnto your grace

Wel, al is perdoned with condicion
That thou be trewfrō henforth to thy might
And serue n loue in thine entencion
Swere this, and than as ferre as it is right
Thou shalte haue grace here in my quenes
yes by ꝑ faith I owe your crown I swer (sight
Thought death therfore me thirlith with his
(spere
And whan the kinge had sene vs euerychone
He let commaunde an Officer in hie
To take oure faith and shew vs one by one
The statutes of the courte ful besily
Anon the booke was leide before their iye
To rede and se whate thing we must obserue
In Loues Courte, till that we dye & sterue.

And for that I was lettred
their I red
The statuteshole of loues
Courte and hall
The firste statute that on
the booke was spied
was to be true in thought
and dedes al
Unto the king of loue the lorde ryall
And to the quene as faithful and as kinde
As I coude thinke w harte will and minde

The Seconde statute secretly to kepe
Councel of loue not blowing euery where
Al that I know and let it sinke and flete
It may not sowne in euery wightes ere
Erling slaunder ay for dred and fere
And to my lady whiche I loue and serue
Be true and kinde her grace for to deserue

The Thirde statute was clerely write also
Withouten chaunge to liue and die the same
None other loue to take for wel ne woo
For bryinde delite for ernest nor for game
Without repent for laughing or for grame
To biden stil in ful perseueraunce
Al this was hole the kinges ordinaunce

The Fourth statute to purchace euer to here
And stiren folke to loue and beten fire
On Uenus auter here aboute and there
And preache to them of loue and hote desire
And tel how loue wil qiten wel thire here
This muste be kept and loth me to displease
If loue be wroth, passe for there by is an ease

The. U. statute not to be daungerous
If that a thought would reue me of my slepe
Nor of a sight to be ouer squmous
And so verely this statute was to kepe
To turne and wallowe in my bed and wepe
When that my lady of her crueltie
Would from her harte erilin al pite

The. UI. statute it was for me to vse
Alone to wander voide of company
And on my ladis beautie for to muse
And to thinke no force to liue or die
And eft again to thinke the remedy
How to her grace I might anon attain
And tel my wo vnto my soneraine

The. UII. statute was to be pacient
Whether my lady ioyful were or wroth
For wordes glad or heauy diligent
Whether that she me helden lefe or loth
And herupon I put was to mine othe
Her for to serue and lowely to obey
And shewing my chere ye. xx. sith a day

The. UIII. statute to my remembraunce
Was to speake and pray my lady dere
With hourely labour and great entēdaunce
Me for to loue with al her harte entere
And me delire and make me ioyful chere
Right as she is surmouning euery faire
Of beautie wel and gentil debonaire

The. IX. statute with lettrs writ of golde
This was the sentence how that I and al
Shulde euer dred to be to ouer bolde
Her to displease and truly so I shal
But ben content for thing that may fale
And mekely take her chastisement, and yerde
And to offende her euer benaferde

The. X. statute was egally to discerne
Betwne the lady, and thine abilite
And thinke thy selfe arte neuer like to yerne
By right her mercy nor of equite
But of her grace, and womanly pitee
For though thy selfe be noble in thy strene
A thousande folde more nobil ise thy quene

Thy

Thy liues lady, and thy soueraine
That hath thin harte all hole in gouernaūce
Thou maiest no wise, it taken to disdaine
To put the humblie at her ordinaunce
And giue her free the reine of her plesaunce
For libertie is thyng that women loke
And truely els the matter is a croke.

The.xi.statute thy signes for to knowe
With ye and finger and with smiles softe
And lowe to couche and alwaie for to showe
For drede of spies, for to winken ofte
But secretly to dryng vp a sigh a lofte
And eke beware of ouer moche resorte
For that parauenture spilleth all thy sport.

The.xii.statute remember to obserue
For all the paine thou hast for loue and wo
All is to lite her mercie to deserue
Thou mustē thē thinke wher euer ỹ ride or go
And mortall woundes suffre thou also
All for her sake, and thinke it well be sette
Upon thy loue, for it maie not be bette.

The.xiii.statute, whilome is to thinke
What thyng maie best thy ladie like & please
And in thine hartes botome let it sinke
Some thyng deuise, and take for thyne ease
And sente it her, that maie her harte pease
Some harte or ryng, or letter or deuise
Or precious stone, but spare not for no price.

The.xiiii.statute eke thou shalt assaie
Formely to kepe the moste parte of thy life
Wishe that thy Ladie, in thine armes laie
And nightly dreme, ỹ hast thy nightes hartes
Swetly i armes, strainyng her as blike (wife
And when thou seest it is but fantasie
Se that thou syng not ouer merely.

For to moche ioye, hath ofte a wofull ende
It longeth eke, this statute for to holde
To deme thy ladie euermore thy frende
And thinke thy self in no wise a cocolde
In euery thyng she doeth, but as she should
Construe the beste beleue no tales newe
For many a lye is tolde, that semth full true

But thinke that she se bounteous and faire
Coud not be false imagine this algate
And think ỹ tōges wicked would her appaire
Sklanderyng her name, & worshipfull estate
And louers true to setten at debate
And though ỹ seest a faute, right at thine ye
Excuse it bliue, and glose it pretilie.

The.xv.statute, vse to swere and stare
And counterfeite a lesyng hardely
To saue thy ladies honour euery whare
And put thy self to fight boldely
Saie she is good, vertuous, and ghostly
Clere of entent, and harte thought and will
And argue not for reason, ne for skill.

Againe thy ladies pleasure ne entent
For loue will not be counterpleted in deede
Saie as she saieth, then shalt thou not be shēt
The Crowe is white, ye truly so I rede
And aye what thing ỹ she thee will forbede
Eschue all that, and giue her soueraintee
Her appetite folowe in all degre.

The.xvi.statute, kepe it if thou maie
Seuen sith at night, thy ladie for to please
And seuen at midnight, seuen at morow daie
And drinke a caudell, earely for thine ease
Doe this, and kepe thine hedde frō all disease
And winne the garlande, here of louers all
That euer came in court, or euer shall.

Full fewe thinke I, this statute hold & kepe
But truely this my reason giueth me fele
That some louers, should rather fall a slepe
Then take on hande, to please so oft and wele
There laie none othe, to this statute a dele
But kepe who might, as gaue him his corage
Now get this garlande, lustie folke of age

Now win who maie, ye lustie folke of youth
This garlande fresh, of floures red and white
Purple and blewe, and colours fell vncouth
And I shall croune hym, kyng of all delite
In all the courte, there was not to my sight
A louer true, that he ne was a drede
When he expresse, hath heard the statute rede.

The.xvii.statute, when age approcheth on
And lust is laied, and all the fire is queint
As freshly then, thou shalt begin to sonne
And dote in loue, and all her image paint
In the remēbraunce, till thou begin to faint
And in the first season, thyne harte began
And her desire, though thou ne maie ne can.

Performe thy liuyng, actuell and lust
Register this in thyne remembraunce
Eke when ỹ maist not kepe thy thing frō rust
Ot speake and talke, of pleasaunt daliaunce
For ỹ shall make thyne hart reioyce & daunce
And when ỹ maiest no more the game assaie
The statute bidde thee, praie for them ỹ maie.

The.xviii. statute, holy to commende
To please thy ladie, is that thou eschewe
With slutishenesse, thy self to offende
Be soilike, freshe, and sete with thinges newe
Courtlie with maner, this is all thy due
Gentill of porte, and louyng cleanlinesse
This is the thing, that liketh thy maistresse.

And not to wander, liche a dulled Asse
Ragged and torne, disguised in a raie
Ribaude in speche, or out of measure passe
Thy bounde excedyng, thinke on this waie
For women, but of tender hartes saie
And lightly set their pleasure in a place
When thei misthinke, thei lightly let it passe

The.xix. statute, meate and drinke forgete
Eche other daie, see that thou fast for loue
For in the courte, thei liue withouten mete
Saue soche as cometh from Venus al aboue
Thei take none hede in pain of great reproue
Of meate and drinke, for that is all in vaine
Onely thei liue, by sight of their soueraine.

The.xx. statute, last of euerichone
Enrolle it in thyne hartes priuitee
To wring & waile, to turne, & sigh and grone
When that thy ladie, absent is from thee
And eke renewe the wordes that she
Betwene you twain, hath said & al the chere
That thee hath made, thy liues lady dere.

And se thyne harte in quiete, ne in rest
Soiourne to tyme, thou seen thy Ladie este
But where she won, by South, or east or West
With all thy force, now se it be not leste
Be diligent, till tyme thy life be reste
In that thou maiest, thy ladie for to see
This statute was of old antiquitee.

An officer of high authoritee
Cleped Rigour, made vs swere anone
He was corrupte with parcialitee
Fauour, praier, ne gold that clerely shone
Ye shall (q he) now sweren here echone
Yong and old, to kepe in that thei maie
The statutes truely, all after this daie.

O God thought I, hard is to make this othe
But to my power, shall I them obserue
In all this worlde, nas matter haife so lothe
To sweare for all, for though my body sterue
I haue no might, the hole to reserue
But herken now, the cace how it befell
After my othe was made, the trothe to tell.

I tourned leaues, lodkyng on this booke
Where other statutes were of women shene
And right forth with rigour, on me gan looke
Full angerly, and saied vnto the quene
I traitour was, and charged me let been
There maie no man (q he) the statute knowe
That long to woman, hie degree ne lowe.

In secrete wise, thei kepten been full close
Thei soune echone, to libertie my frende
Pleasaunt thei be, and to their own purpose
There wote no wight of thē, but God & fende
Ne naught shal witte, vnto the worldes ende
The quene hath yeue me charge, ī pain to die
Neuer to rede ne seen them with myne iye.

For men shall not so nere of counsaill been
With womanhode, ne knowen of her guise
Ne what thei think, ne of their wit thengine
I me report to Salomon the wise
And mightie Sampson, which begiled thrise
With Dalida was, he wot that in a throwe
There maie no man statute of women knowe

For it perauenture maie right so be fall
That thei be bounde be nature to disceiue
And spinne and wepe, and sugre strew on gal
The harte of man, to rauiche and to reiue
And whet their tonge, as sharpe as swerde or
It maie be tide, this is their ordinaūce gleue
So must thei lowlie doen their obseruaunce.

And kepe the statute, yeuen them of kinde
Of soche as loue hath yeue hem in their life
Mē maie not wete, why turneth euery wind
Nor waren wise, nor been inquisitife
To knowe secrete of maide, widowe, or wife
For thei their statutes, haue to them reserued
And neuer man, to knowe thē hath deserued.

Now dresse you forth, ỹ God of loue you guide
(q Rigour) then and seke the temple bright
Of Cithera, Goddes here beside
Beseche her by influence and might
Of all her bertue, you to teache a right
How for to serue your ladies, and to please
Ye that been sped, and set your harte in ease.

And ye that been vnpurueied praier eke
Comfort you sone, with grace and destinie
That ye maie set your hart, there ye maie like
In soche a place, that it to loue maie be
Honour and worship and felicitie
To you for aie, now goeth by one assent
Graunt mercie sir (q we) and forth we went.

Demoutly

Deuoutly soft and easie pace to se
Venus the Goddes, Image all of golde
And there we found a thousand on their kne
Some freshe and faire, some dedly to beholde
In sondrie Mantils new, and some wer olde
Some painted were, with flames red as fire
Outward to shewe, their inward hote desire.

With dolefull chere, full fele in their cōplaint
Cried Ladie Venus, rewe vpon our sore
Receiue our billes, with teares all be dreint
We maie not wepe, there is no more in store
But wo and pain, vs fretteth more and more
Thou blissedful Planet, louers sterre so shene
Haue routh on vs, that sigh and careful been

And punishe Ladie, greuously we praie
The false vntrue, with counterfeite plesaūce
That made their othe, be true to liue or deie
With chere assured, and with countenaunce
And falsly now thei footen loues daunce
Barain of routh, vntrue of that thei saied
Now that their lust, and pleasure is alaied.

Yet efte againe a thousande milion
Reioysyng loue, leadyng their life in blisse
Thei saied Venus, redresse of all diuision
Goddes eternell, thy name I hired is
By louers bonde is knit, all thing iwis
Beast vnto beast, the yearth to water wanne
Birde vnto birde, and woman vnto man.

This is the life of ioye, that we been in
Resemblyng life, of heauenly paradise
Loue is exiler aie, of vice and sinne
Loue maketh hartes, lustie to deuise
Honour and grace, haue thei in euery wise
That been to loues lawe obedient
Loue maketh folke, benigne and diligent

Aie steryng them, to drede vice and shame
In their degree, it maketh them honourable
And swete it is, of loue beare the name
So that his loue be faithfull, true and stable
Loue pruneth hym, to semen amiable
Loue hath no faute, there it is exercised
But sole with thē, that haue all loue dispised

Honour to the celestiall and clere
Goddes of Loue, and to thy celicitude
That yeuest vs light, so ferre doune from thy
Persyng our hartes, w̄ thy pulcritude (spere
Comparison none of similitude
Maie to thy grace be made in no degree
That hast vs set with Loue in vnitie.

Greate cause haue we, to praise thy name & ye
For through thee, we liue in ioye and blisse
Blessed be thou, moste soueraine to see
Thy holy courte of gladnesse, maie not misse
A thousande sith, we maie reioyce in this
That we been thine, with harte and all I fere
Enflamed with thy grace, and heauenly fere.

Musyng of tho, that spaken in this wise
I me bethought, in my remembraunce
Myne orison right godlie to deuise
And pleasauntly, with hartes obeisaunce
Beseche thee Goddes, voiden my greuaunce
For I loued eke, saufe that I wist not where
Yet doune I set, and saied as ye shall here.

Fairest of all, that euer were or bee
Licour and light, to pensife creature
Myne hole affiaunce, and my ladie free
My Goddes bright, my fortune and my vre
I yeue and yelde my harte, to thee full sure
Humbly besechyng, ladie of thy grace
Me to bestowe, in some blessed place.

And here I vowe me, faithfull, true and kind
Without offence of mutabilitie
Humbly to serue, while I haue wit and mind
Myne hole affiaunce, and my ladie free
In thilke place, there ye me signe to be
And sith this thyng, of newe is yeue me aie
To loue and serue, and nedely must I obeie.

Be merciable with thy fire of grace
And fire myne harte, there beautie is & routh
For hote I loue, determine in no place
Saufe onely this, be God and by my trouth
Troubled I was, with slomber, slepe & slouth
This other night, and in a vision
I see a woman romen vp and doune.

Of meane stature, and semely to beholde
Lustie and freshe, demure of countenaunce
Yong and well shap, with heer shone as golde
With iyen as cristall, ferced with pleasaunce
And she gan stirre mine harte alite to daunce
But sodainly she vanishe gan right there
Thus I maie saie, I loue & wote not where.

For what she is, ne her dwellyng I not
And yet I fele, that loue distreineth me
Might iche her knowe, ẏ would I faine God
Serue and obeye, with all benignitie (wot
And if that other be my destinie
So that no wise, I shall her neuer se
Then graunt me her, that best maie liken me

With

With glad reioyce to liue in perfite hele
Deuoide of wrathe, repent or variaunce
And able me to doe, that maie be weie
Unto my ladie, with hartes hie pleasaunce
And mightie goddes, through thy puruiaũce
Dy wit my thought, my lust & loue so guide
That to thine honour, I maie me prouide.

To set mine hart, in place there I maie like
And gladly serue, with all affeccion
Greate is the pain, whiche at mine hart doth stiche
Till I be sped by thyne eleccion
Helpe Ladie Goddes, that possession
I might of her haue, that in all my life
I clepen shall my quene, and hartes wife.

And in the courte of Loue, to dwell for aie
Dy will it is, and doen thee Sacrifice
Daily with Diane, ebe for to fight and fraie
And holden werre, as might will me suffice
That Goddes chaste, I kepen in no wise
To serue, a figge for all her chastite
Her lawe is for Religiousite.

And thus gan finiche praier, laude, & preice
Whiche that I doue to Uenus on my knee
And in myne harte, to ponder and to peice
I gaue a none her Image freshe beautie
Heile to that figure swete, and heile to thee
Cupide (q I) and rose, and yede my weie
And in the temple, as I yede I seie

A shrine surmountyng, all in stones riche
Of whiche the force, was pleasaunce to mine
With Diamonde or Saphire, neuer liche (iye
I haue none seen, ne wrought so wonderlie
So when I met with Philobone in hie
I gan demaunde, who is this sepulture
For sothe (q she) a tender creature.

Is shrined there, and Pitie is her name
She sawe an Egle, wrehe hym on a tie
And pluche his wing, & eke him in his game
And tender harte of that, hath made her die
Eke she would wepe & mone, right pitously
To seen a louer suffre greate destresse
In all the courte nas none, that as I gesse.

That coud a louer haue so well auaile
Ne of his wo, the torment or the rage
When for he was sure withouten faile
That of his grief, she coud the heate asswage
In stede of Pitie, spedeth hote corage
The matters all of courte, now she is dedde
I me report in this to womanhedde

For weile and wepe, and crie, & speake, & praie
Women would not haue pitie on thy plaint
Ne by that mean, to ease thine harte conuaie
But thee receiuen, for their owne talent
And saie that Pitie, causeth thee in consent
Of reuth to take, thy seruice and thy paine
In that thou maiest, to please thy soueraine.

But this is counsaill, kepe it secretly
(q she) I nolde for all the worlde about
The quene of Loue it wist, and witte ye why
For if by me, this matter springen out
In courte no lenger should I out of doubt
Dwellen, but shame in all my life endry
Now kepe it close (q she) this hardely.

Well, all is well, now shall ye seen she saied
The fairest ladie vnder Sonne that is
Come on with me, demeane you lich a maide
With shamefast drede, for ye shall speke I wis
With her that is the mirrour ioye and blisse
But somwhat straunge, & sad of her demeane
She is, beware your countenaunce be seen.

Nor ouer light, ne recheleſſe, ne to bolde
Ne malapert, ne rennyng with your tong
For she will you, obeisen and beholde
And you demaunde, why ye wer hens so long
Out of this courte, withouten resort emong
In Rosiall her name is hote a right
Whose harte is yet, yeuen to no wight.

And ye also been, as I vnderstonde
With loue but light, auaunced by your worde
Might ye by hap, your fredome maken bond
And fall in grace with her, and wele accorde
Well might ye thanke, the God of Loue & lord
For she that ye sawe, in your dreame appere
To loue sothe one, what are thei then ỹ nere.

yet wote ye what, as my remembraunce
Me yeueth now, ye saine where that ye saie
That ye with loue, had neuer acquaintaunce
Saue in your dreame, right late this other daie
Why yes parde, my life that durst I laie
That ye were caught vpon an heath, when I
Sawe you complain, and sigh full pitously.

within an herber, and a gardein faire
Where flowers growe, and herbes vertuous
Of whiche the sauour swete was & the heire
There were your self, full hote and amorous
I wis ye been to nice and daungerous
I would ye now repent, and loue some newe
Naie by my trothe, I saied I neuer knewe.

The

The goodly wight, whose I shal be for aye
Guide me the lorde, that loue hath made ⁊ me
But forthe we went, into a chambre gaie
There was Rosiall, womanly to se
Whose streames, sotell persyng of her iye
Mine hart gan thrill, for beautie in ẏ stounde
Alas (q I) who hath me yeue this wounde.

And then I drede to speake till at the laste
I grete thee ladie, reuerently and wele
When that my sigh, was gone and ouer paste
And doune on knees, full humbly gan I knele
Besechyng her, my feruent wo to kele
For there I tooke full purpose in my mynde
Unto her grace, my painfull harte to bynde.

For if I shall all fully her discriue
Her hed as rounde, by compasse of nature
Her heere as golde, she passed all on liue
And Lillie forehed had this creature
With liuelishe browes, flawe of colour pure
Betwene ẏ which, was meane disseueraunce
From euery browe, to shewe a distaunce.

Her nose directed streight, and euen as line
With forme and shape, thereto conuenient
In which ẏ gods milke white path doth shine
And eke her iyen been bright and orient
As is the Smaragde, vnto my iudgement
Or yet these sterres heauenly small ⁊ bright
Her visage is of louely rede and white

Her mouthe is short, ⁊ shitte in little space
Flamyng somedeale, not ouer redde I meane
With pregnaunt lips, ⁊ thicke to kisse percace
For lippes thinne not fat, but euer lene
They serue of naught, they bee not worth a
For if the basse been full, there is delite (beane
Maximian truely thus doeth he write.

But to my purpose, I saie white as snowe
Been all her tethe, and in order thei stonde
Of one stature, and eke her breth I trowe
Surmounteh all odours, that euer I founde
In swetenesse, and her body, face and honde
Been sharply slender, so that from the hedde
Unto the foote, all is but womanhedde.

I holde my peace, of other thinges hidde
Here shal my soule, and not my tong bewraie
But how she was arraied, if ye me bidde
That shall I well discouer you and saie
A bende of gold and silke, full freshe and gaie
With her intresse, broudered full wele
Right smothly kept, and shinyng euery dele.

About her necke, a flower of freshe deuise
With Rubies set, that lustie were to sene
And she in goune, was light and sommerwise
Shapen full wele, the colour was of grene
With aureat sent aboute her sides clene
With diuers stones, precious and riche
Th⁹ was she raied, yet sawe I neuer her liche.

For if that Joue had this ladie seine
Tho Calixto ne Alcenia
Thei neuer hadden in his armes leine
Ne he had loued the faire Eurosa
Ye ne yet Dane ne Antiopa
For all their beutie stoode in rosiall
She semed lich a thyng celestiall

In bountie, fauour, porte and similinesse
Pleasaunt of figure, mirrour of delite
Gracious to seen, and roote of all gentilnesse
With angell visage, lustie redde and white
There was not lack, sause daunger had alite
This goodly freshe, in rule and gouernaunce
And somdele straũge, she was for her plesaũce

And truly sone, I toke my leaue and went
When she had me enquired, what I was
For more and more, impressen gan the dent
Of loues darte, while I behelde her face
And efte againe I come, to seken grace
And vp I put my bill, with sentence clere
That foloweth after, rede and ye shall here.

O ye freshe, of beautie the roote
That nature hath formed so wele and made
Princes and quene, and ye that maie do boote
Of all my langoure, with your wordes glad
Ye wounded me, ye made me wo bestad
Of grace redresse my mortall giue as ye
Of all my harte the very causer be.

Now am I caught, and vnware sodainly
With persaunt streames, of your iye clere
Subiecte to been, and seruen you mekely
And all your man, I wis my ladie dere
Abidyng grace, of whiche I you require
That mercilesse, ye cause me not to sterue
But guerdon me, liche as I maie deserue

For by my trothe, the daies of my breath
I am and will be your, in will and harte
Pacient and meke, for you to suffer death
If it require now, rue vpon my smarte
And this I swere, I neuer shall out starte
From loues courte, for none aduersitie
So ye would rue, on my distresse and me.

My destenie me fate and houre I bille
That haue me set to been obedient
Onely to you the floure of all I wis
I truste to dienis neuer to repent
For euer redy glad and diligent
ye shall me finde in seruice to your grace
Till death my life out of my bodie rase.

Humble vnto your excellence so digne
Enforcyng aye my wittes and delite
To serue & please with glad harte & benigne
And been as Troilus Troies knight
Or Antonie for Cleopatre bright
And neuer you me thinkes, to renay
Thus shall I kepe vnto myne endyng day.

Enprint my speache in your memoriall
Sadly my princes salue of all my sore
And thinke that for I would becomen thrall
And been your owne, as I haue saied before
ye muste of pitie cherische more and more
your man and tender after his deserte
And giue hym corage for to been experte.

For where ỳ one hath set his harte on fire
And findeth neither refute ne pleasaunce
Ne worde of cõfort, death will quite his hire
Alas that there is none allegaunce
Of all their wo, alas the greate greuaunce
To loue vnloued, but ye my ladie dere
In other wise maie gouerne this matere.

Truly gramercie frende of your good will
And of your profer in your humble wise
But for your seruice, take and kepe it still
And wher ye saie I ought you well to cherish
And of your griefe the remedie deuise
I knowe not why I nam acquainted well
With you ne wote not sothly where ye dwell

In art of loue and wit and songes make
That maie be song in honour of the kyng
And quene of Loue, and then I vndertake
He that is sadde, shall then full mery syng
And daungerous, not been in euery thyng
Beleche I you, but seen my will and rede
And let your answere put me out of drede

What is your name, reherse it here I praie
Of whens and where, of what condicion
That ye been of, let see come of and saie
Faine would I knowe your dispocion
Ye haue put vpon your old entencion
But whate ye meane, to serue me I ne wote
Saufe that ye saie, ye loue me wounder hote

My name alas, my harte why
Philogenet I cald am ferre and nere
Of Cãbrige clerke, ỳ neuer thinke to chaunge
Fro you ỳ with your heauenly stremes clere
Rauishe myne harte and ghost, and all in fere
This is the first I write my bill for grace
Me thinke I see, some mercie in your face.

And whate I mene, by gods ỳ al hath wrought
My bille that maketh finall mencion
That ye been ladie in myne inward thought
Of all myne harte withouten offencion
That I beste loue, and haue sith I begon
To drawe to courte, lo then what mist I saie
I yelde me here, vnto your nobleye.

And if that I offende or wilfully
Be pompe of harte, your precept disobaie
Or doen again your wille vnskilfully
Or greuen you for earnest or for plaie
Correcte ye me right sharply then I praie
As it is seen vnto your womanhede
And rewe on me, or els I nam but dede.

Naie God forbede to feffe you so with grace
And for a worde of fugred eloquence
To haue compassion in so little space
Then were it tyme that some of vs wer hens
ye shall not finde in me soche insolence
Aye what is this, maie ye not suffre sight
How maie ye looke vpon the candell light.

That clere is and hotter then myne ye
And yet ye saied the beames perse and frete
How shall ye then the candell light endrie
For well wotte ye that hath the sharper hete
And there ye bidde me, you correct and bete
If ye offende, naie that maie not be doen
There come but few, that speden here so sone

withdrawe your ye, withdrawe fro presens ele
Hurte not your self, through foly with a loke
I would be sorry, so to make you sicke
A woman should beware ele whom she toke
ye beth a clerke go serchen my boke
If any women been so light to winne
Naie abide a while, tho ye were all my kinne.

So sone ye maie not win myne hart in truth
The guise of court will seen your stedfastnesse
And as you doen to haue vpon you reuth
your owne deserte, and lowly gentilnesse
That will reward you, ioye for heauinesse
And tho ye waxen pale, and grene and dede
ye moste it vse, a while withouten drede.

And

And it accept and grutchen in no wise
But where as ye me hastely desire
To bene to loue me thinke ye be not wise
Cease of youre language cease I you require
For he that hath this.xx. yere bene here
May not optaine, than maruaile I that ye
Be now so bold of loue to trete with me

A mercy hart my lady and my loue
My right wise princesse and my lyues guide
Nowe may I plein to Venus al aboue
That rewthles ye may gise this wonder wide
What haue I done why may it not betide
That for my trouthe I may receiued be
Alas than your daūger and your cruelte

In woful houre I gote was wela wey
In woful hour fostered and I fedde
In woful hour I borne that I ne may
My supplicacion swetely haue I spedde
The frosty graue and cold musse be my bedde
Without ye list your grace and mercy shewe
Death with his axe so fasse on me doth hewe

So great disease and in so litel while
So litel ioy that selde I neuer yet
And at my wo Fortune ginneth to smyle
That neuer arst I felte so harde a fitte
Confounded ben my spirites and my witte
Til that my lady take me to her cure
Whiche I loue beste of erthely creature

But that I like that may I not come by
Of that I plain that haue I habondaunce
Sorowe and thought they sit me wōder nye
Me is withhold that might be my plesaunce
Yet turne again my worldly suffisaunce
O lady bright and sauf e your faithful true
And or I die yet ones vpon me rewe

With that I fell in sounde and dede as stone
With colour flaine and wanne as aschе pale
And by the hande she caught me by anon
Arise anon (q she) what haue ye dr̄ōken dwale
Why slepen ye it is no nitertale
Now mercy swete (q I) I was afraied
What thig (q she) hath made you so dismaied

Now wote I wel that ye a louer be
Your hew is witnesse in this thing she said
Yf ye were secret might know e (q she)
Curteise and kinde all this shuld be aleide
And now myne harte al that I haue misseid
I shal amend and set your harte in ease
That worde it is (q I) that doth me please

But this I charge that ye the sentes kepe
And breke them not for sloth nor ignorāce
With that she gan to smile and laughen depe
I wis (q I) I wil do your plesaunce
The.xvi. statute doth me great greuaunce
But ye must that releasse or modifie
I graunte (q she) and so I wil truly

And sostely than her colour gan appeire
As rose so red throughout her vilage al
Wherfore me thinke that it is accordyng here
That she of right be cleped rosial
Thus haue I wonne w̄ wordes great & smal
Some goodly worde of her that I loue best
And trust she shall yet sette mine harte in rest

Othon she said to Philobone
and take
This man with you and lede
him al aboute
Within the courte & shewe him
for my sake
What louers dwel within and al ye route
Of officers him shewe, for he is oute of doute
A slaunger yet come on (q Philobone)
Philogenet with me nowe must ye gon

And stalking softe with easy pace I sawe
Aboute the king stonden enuiron
Attendaunce Diligence and their felow
Fortherer Asperaunce and many one
Dred to offende there stode and not alone
For there was ehe the cruel aduersarye
The louers foo that cleped is Displeasure

Whiche vnto me spake angrely and felle
And said my lady me disseiue ne shall
Trowest thou (q she) that al that she did tell
Is true nay nay but vnder hony gal
Thy birth and his be nothing egal
Caste of thine harte, for all her wordes white
For good faith she loueth thy but a lite

And eke remembre thine habilite
May not cōpare with her this wel thou wot
Ye than came Hope and said my frende let be
Beleue him not Dispaire he ginneth dote
Alas (q I) here is both cold and hote
The tone me biddeth loue the toder nay
Thus wote I not what me is best to say

But wel wote I my lady graunted me
Truly to be my woundes remedy
Her gentilnesse may not infected be
With doblenesse thus trust I til I die

So cast I voide dispaires company
And taken hope to counceland to frende
yea hope that wel(q Philobone)in minde

And there beside within a bay windowe
Stod one in grene ful large of bread & length
His beard as black as fethers of the Crow
His name was lust of woūder mights strēgth
And with Delite to argue there he thinkith
For this was al his opinion
That loue was sinne and so he hath begonne

To reason fatte and ledge auctorite
Nay (q delite) loue is a vertue clere
And from the soule his progresse holdeth he
Blinde apitite of luste doth often stere
And that is sinne for reason lacketh there
For thou thike thy neighbours wife do will
Yet thinke it wel that loue may not be sinne

For God and seint they loue right verely
Voide of al synne and vile, this know I well
Affection of flesshe is sinne truly
But verray loue is vertue as I fele
For verray loue maye not thy freill desire
For loue is loue withouten sinne (ackele
Nowe sint (q Luste) thou spekest not worthy
a pinne

And there I left them in their arguing
Roming ferther in the castel wide
And in a corner Lier stode talking
Of lesings fast with flatery there beside
He said thou woman wear attire of pride
And men were founde of nature variaunte
And coulde be falle & shewen beaw semblaunt

Than flatery bespake and said iwis
Se so she goth on patens faire and fete
It doth right well what piety man is this
That rometh here now truly drink ne niete
Nede I not haue mine harte for ioy doth bete
Him to beholde so is he goodly freshe
It semeth for loue his harte is tender nesshe

This is the courte of lusty folke and glad
And welbecometh their abite and arraye
O why be som so sory and so sadde
Complaining thus in blak and white & gray
Freres they ben and Monkes in good fay
Alas for rouwth great dole it is to sene
To se them thus bewaile and sory bene

Se how they crie & wring their handes whit
For they so sone went to religion
And eke the Nonnes w bail & wimple plight
Their thought that they ben in confusion
Alas they sain we fain perfection
In clothes wide and lacke our libertie
But al the sinne mote on our frendes be

For Venus wote we wold as faine as ye
That bene attired here and welbesene
Desyren man and loue in our degree
Fernie and faithful right as wold the quene
Oure frendes wicke in tender youth & grene
Ayenst our will made vs religious
That is the cause we mourne & wailen thus

Than said the Monke and Freres in the tide
Wel may we curse our Abbes and our place
Our statutes sharpe to sing in copes wide
Chastely to kepe vs oute of loues grace
And neuer to fele comforte ne solace
yet suffre we the hete of loues fire
And after than other happly we desire

O Fortune coursed why nowe and wherfore
Hast thou they said berafte vs libartie
Sithe nature yaue vs instrument in store
And appetide to loue and louers be
Why mot we suffer soche aduerlite
Diane to serue and Venus to refuse
Ful often sythe this matiers doth vs muse

We serue and honour sore ayenste our will
Of chastite the goddes and the quene
Vs leefer were with Venus biden ful
And haue reward for loue and soget bene
Unto these women courtely freshe and shene
Fortune we curse thy wheele of variaunce
Ther we were wel thou reuist our plesaunce

Thus leaue I them w voice of plait and care
In raging wo criyng ful petioully
And as I yede ful naked and ful bare
Some I beholde loking dispiteously
On pouerte that dedly cast their iye
And welaway they cried and were not faine
For they ne might their glad desire attaine

For lacke of richesse worldly and of gold
They banne and curse and wepe & sain alas
That pouerte hath vs hent that whilom stod
At hartes eas and fre and in good case
But now we dare not shew nor selfe in place
Ne vs embolde to dwel in company
There as our hart wold loue right faithfully

And yet againe warde chiked euery nonne
The prange of loue so straineth thaim to crie

Now wo the time (q they) that we be boun
This hateful ordre nise wil doen vs die
We sigh and sobbe and bleden inwardly
Freting our selfe wt thought & hard complait
That nye for loue we waren wode and faint

And as I stode beholding here and there
I was ware of a sorte ful languisching
Sauage and wilde of lokyng and of chere
Their manteilles and their clothes ey tering
And ofte they were of nature complaining
For they their members lacked fote and hand
With visage wry and blinde I vnderstand

They lacked shap and beautie to preferre
Them self in loue and said that god and kind
Hath forged them to worshippen the sterre
Uenus the bright and lefte al behinde
His other werkes clene and oute of minde
For other haue their full shappe and beautie
And we (q they) ben indeformite

And nye to them there was a company
That haue the fusters waried and misaide
I meane the thre of fatall destine
That be our wordes and sone abraide
Oute gan they crie as they had ben affraied
We curse (q they) that euer hath nature
Iformed vs this wofull life to endure

And there he was contrite and gan repent
Confessing hole the wounde that Cithere
Hath with the darte of hote desire him sent
And howe that he to loue muste subiect be
Than held he al his shornes vanite
And said that louers lede ablissed ful life
Yong mē and olde & wido we maide and wife

Bereue my goddesse (q he) thy might
My shornes al and shoffes that I haue
No power for to mocken any wight
That in thy seruice dwel for I ded raue
This knowe I wel right now so god me saue
And I shalbe thy chief post of thy faith
And loue vphold the reuers who so saith

Dissemble stode not ferre frō him in trouth
With party mantil party hode and hose
And said he had vpon his lady routh
And thus he wound him in and gan to glose
Of his entent ful double I suppose
And al the worlde he said he loued it wele
But ay me thought he loued her nere adele

The shamefastenesse was there as I toke hede
That blasshed rede and darst nat ben a knowe
She louer was for therof had she drede
She stode and hing her visage downe alowe
But sochea sight it was to sene I trowe
And of these roses rody on their stalke
Their coud no wight her spy to spekē or talke

In loues harte so gan she to abasshe
Ne durst not vttet al her preuite
Many a stripe and many a greuoule lasshe
She gauen to them that wolden louers be
And hindered sore the simple cominaltie
That in no wise durst grace and mercie craue
For were not she they nede but alke and haue

Where yt they now aprochin for to spekē
Than shamefastnesse returneth them again
They thinke if they our secrets counsel breke
Our ladies wil haue scorne on vs certein
And auenture thinken greate disdain
Thus shamefastnesse may bringen in dispeire
When she is dede the toder will be heire

Comforth a Maunter now I ring thy bel
I spied him sone to God I make a vowe
He loked black as fendes doth in hell
The firste (q he) that euer did vowe
Within a worde she come I wotte not how
So that in armes was my lady fre
And so hath ben a thousand mo than she

In England Bretain Spain and Picardie
Artois and Fraūce and vp in hie Holande
In Burgoine Naples and Italye
Nauerne and Grece, and vp in Hethen lond
Was neuer woman yet that wolde withstōd
To ben at commaundement whan I wolde
I lacked neither siluer coigne ne gold

And there I met with this estate and that
And here I brocched her and here I trowe
Lo there goeth one of myne & wotte ye what
Yon freshe attired haue I leide ful lowe
And sochē one yonder eke right wel I knowe
I kepte the statute whan we lay ifere
And yet yon same hath made me right goode
(chere

Thus hath a Maunter blowen euery where
Al that he knoweth and more a thousand fold
His auncestrie of kinne was to lier
For firste he maketh promise for to hold
His ladis councel and it not vnfolde
Wherfore the secrete when he dothe vnshitte
Than lieth he that al the worlde maye witte

For falsing so his promise and behestе
I wounder sore he hath soche fantasie
He lacketh witte I trowe or is a bestе
That can no bette him selfe with reason guy
Be mine aduice loue shalbe contrarie
To his auaile and him ehe dishonoure
So that in courte he shall no more soioure

Take hede(q she)this litil Philobone
where enuie rocketh in the cornor yonde
And sitteth dirke and ye shall se anone
His lene bodie fading face and honde
Him selfe he fretteth as I vnderstonde
witnesse of Ouide Methamorphosose
The louers so he is I wil not glose

For where alouer thinketh him promote
Enuie wil grutche repining at his wele
It swelleth sore aboute his hartes rote
That in no wise he canne not liue in hele
And if the faithful to his lady stele
Enuie will noise and ringe it rounde aboute
And sey moch worse thā done is out of doute

And preuie thought reioysing of him selfe
Stode not ferre thens in abite meruelous
yon is thought some spryte or some elfe
His sotil Image is so curious
How is(q I) that he is shaded thus
With yonder cloth I not of whate coloure
And nere I went and gan to lere and pore

And frained him question ful harde
Whate is(q I)the thing thou louest beste
Or what is bote vnto thy paines harde
Me thinke thou liuste here in great vnrest
Thou wandrest aye from south to est & west
And est to north as ferre as I canne see
There is no place in Court may holden thee

Whom folowest thou wher is thy hart iset
But my demaunde aboile I the require
Me thought(q he)no creature may let
No we to ben here and where as I desire
For where as absence hath done out the fire
My mery thought it kindeleth yet againe
That bodely me thinke with my soueraine

I stand and speake & laugh and kisse & halse
So that my thought comforteth me ful oft
I think god wote though al ỹ world be false
I wil be true I thinke also howe soft
My lady is in speche and this on loft
Bringeth mine harte from ioy and gladnesse
This preuey thought alaieth mine heuinesse

And whate I thinke or where to be no man
In al this erthe can tel I wis but I
And ehe there nis no swalow swift ne swan
So wight of wing ne halse so yerne can flie
For I canne ben and that right sodenly
In heuen in hell in Paradise and here
And with my lady whan I wil desire

I am of counsel ferre and wide I wote
With lorde and lady and their preuite
I wotte it al,and be it hoote or colde
They shall not speake wouten licence of me
I myne in soche as seasonable be
For firste the thing is thought within ỹ hart
Er any worde oute from the mouth astarte

And w that word thought bad farewel a pede
Eke furthe went I to sene the courtes guise
And at the doore came in so God me spede
Twenty courteours of age and of assise
Liche high and brode and as I me aduise
The golden loue and leden loue they hight
The tone was lad the toder glad and light

yes draw your hart w all your force & might
To lustinesse and bene as ye haue seid
And thinke that I no drope of fauour hight
Ne neuer had vnto your desire obeide
Til sodenly me thought me was affraied
To sene you ware so dede of countenaunce
And pite bade me done you some plesaunce

Oute of her shrine she rose from death to liue
And in mine eare ful priuely she spake
Doth not your seruaũt hens away to drive
Rosial(q she)and than mine harte brake
For tenderiche & where I founde moch lacke
In your persone and I me bethought
And saide this is the man myne harte hath (sought

Gramercy Pite might I not suffice
To yeue the laude vnto thy shrine of golde
God wotte I wold for sith that she did rise
From death to liue for me I am behold
To thanken you a thousande tymes tolde
And eke my lady Rosial the shene
Whiche hath in cõforte set mine harte i wene

And here I make myne protestacion
And depely swere as mine power to bene
Faithful deuoide of variacion
And here forbere in anger or in tene
And seruiceable to my worldes quene
With al my reason and intelligence
To done her honour high and reuerence

I had

I had not spoke so sone the worde but she
My souerain did thanke me hartely
And said abide ye shal dwelle still with me
Till season come of May for than truly
The king of loue and al his company
Shall holde his feste ful ryally and welle
And there I bode til that the season felle

(ryse

ON May day whan ỹ larke began to
To Matens wēt ỹ lusty Nightingal
within atēple shapē / authorn wise
He might not slepe in all ỹ nyghter-
But Domine labia gan he crie and gale (tale
My lippes open lord of loue I crie
And let my mouth thy prising now bewrye

The Egle Sang Venite bodies al
And let vs ioye to loue that is oure helth
And to the deske a non they gan to fall
And who came late he preced in by stelth
Than saied the Faucō our owē hartes welth
Domine Dominus noster I wote
Ye be the God that done vs brenne thus hote

Coli enarrant said the Popingay
Your might is told in heuen and firmament
And thē came in the gold finche freshe & gay
And saied this Psalme wt hartely glad intēt
Domini est terra This laten intent
The God of loue hath verth in gouernaunce
And than the wrē gan scippē and to daunce

Iube Domine Lorde of loue I pray
Commaunde me wel this lesson for to rede
This legende is of al that wolden dye
Warters for loue, God yt the soules spede
And to the Venus signe we oute of drede
By influence of al thy vertue greate
Besechyng thee to kepe vs in our heate

The seconde lesson Robin Redebrestle sang
Hail to the God and goddes of our lay
And to the lectorn amorily he sprong
Hail (q he) O fresche season of May
Our moneth glad that singen on the spray
Hail to the floures rede and white & blewe
Whiche by their vertue maketh our lust new

The thirde lesson the Turtil doue tolke vp
And therat lough the Mauis in scorne
He said O God as mote I thene or suppe
This folishe Doue wil gife vs al an horne
There ben right here a .M. better borne
To rede this lesson whiche as wel as he
And eke as hote can loue in al degree

The Turtil doue said welcom welcom May
Gladsom and light to louers that ben true
I thanke the lord of loue that doth purvey
For me to rede this lesson al of newe
For in good soth of corage I purpose
To serue my make tyll death vs must departe
And than Tue autem sang he al aparte

Te deum amoris sang the Throstel cocke
Tuball hym self the firste Musician
With key of armony coude not on locke
So swete tewne as that the Throstel can
The lorde of loue we praisen (q he) than
And so done al the foules great and light
Honour we May in fals louers dispite

Dominus regnauit said the Pecocke there
The lord of loue that mighty prince iwis
He hath receiued here and euery where
Nowe Iubilate Sang whate meaneth this
Said than the Lynet welcom lord of blisse
Oute sterte the Owle with Benedicite
What meaneth al this mery fare (q he)

Laudate Sang the Larke with voice full shrill
And eke the Kight O admirabile
This quere wil thorow mine eares pers & thril
But what, welcom this May season (q he)
And honoure to the lord of loue mote be
That hath this feste so solempne and so hie
Amen Said al and so said eke the Pie

And forth the Cockowe gan procede anon
With Benedictus thanking God in hast
That in this May wolde visite them echon
And gladden them al while the feast shal last
And therwithal a laughter oute he braste
I thanke it God that I shuld ende the song
And al the Seruice whiche hath ben so long

Thus sang they al the seruice of the feste
And that was done right erly to my dome
And furth goth al the courte both moste & lest
To fetche ỹ floures fresh and braūch & blome
And namely hauthorn brought both page & grome
Wt fresh garlantes party blewe white
And than reioysen in their greate delite

Eke eche at other threwe the floures bright
The Pyrmerose the Violete the gold
So than as I beheld the roial sight
My lady gan me sodenly behold
And with a frowe loue plited many a fold
She smot me through the harte as blive
And Venus yet I thanke I am alive

¶ Chaucers wooz:

des vnt o his owne

Scriuener.

Dam Scriuener yf euer it
the be falle
Boece oz Troiles foz to
wzite new
Under thy longe lockes yͭ
must haue the scalle
But after my makynge
thou wzite moze true
So ofte adaye I mote thy werke renew
It to cozrecte and eke to rubbe and scrape
And al is thozow thy negligence and rape.

Et sic est finis.

¶ Thus endeth

the workes of Geffray

Chaucer,

Epitaphium Galfridi Chaucer, per poetam laureatum Stephanum Surigonum Mediolanensem in decretis licenciatum.

Yerides musæ si possint numia flæ-
tus
Fundere diuinas, atq; rigare genas:
Galfridi vatis Chaucer crudelia fata
Plam gite: sit lachrimis abstinuisse nephas.
Vos coluit viuens: at vos celebrate sepultum
Reddatur merito gracia digna viro.
Grandè decus vobis est docti musæ Maronis
Qua didicit melius lingua latinæ loqui
Grandè, nouumq; decus Chaucer, famamq; parauit
Heu quantum fuerat prisca Britanna rudis
Reddidit insignem maternis versibus, vt iam
Aurea splendescat, ferrea facta prius.
Hunc latuisse virum nil, si tot opuscula vertes,
Dixeris, egregijs que decorata modis,
Socratis ingenium, vel fontes Philosophiæ
Quicquid & archani dogmata sacræ ferunt.
Et quascumq; velis, tenuit dignissimus artes
Hic vates, paruo conditus hoc tumulo.
Ah laudis qnantum preclara Britannia perdis,
Dum rapuit tantum mors odiosa virum,
Crudeles parce, crudelia fila sorores,
Non tamen extincta corpora, famæ perit
Viuet in eternum, viuent dum scripta poete:
Viuent in æterno tot monumenta die
Si quæ bonos tangit pietas, si carmine dignus,
Carmina qui cecinit tot cumulata modis.
Hec sibi Marmoreo scribantur verba sepulchro
Hec maneat laudis sarcina summa suæ.
Galfridus Chaucer vates, & famæ poesis
Materne hac sacræ sum tumulatus humo

Post obitum Caxton voluit te viuere cura
Guillelmi, Chaucer clare poetæ tui,
Nam tua non solum compressit opuscula formis,
Has quoq; sed laudes iussit hic esse tuas.

Here beginneth

the Prologue, of the Storie of Thebees.

When bright Phebus, passed was the Ram
Midde of April, and into the Bulle cam
And Saturne olde, with his Frostie face
In Virgine, taben had his place
Malencolike, and slough of mocion
And was also, in thoppolicion
Of Lucina the Moone, moiste and pale
That many shoure, fro heauen made auaile
When Aurora, was in the morowe redde
And Jupiter, in the Crabbes hedde
Hath take his paleis, and his mansion
The lustie tyme, and soly freshe season
When that Flora, the noble mightie quene
The soile hath clad, in newe tender grene
With her floures, craftely meint
Braunche & bough, with red & white depeint
Fletyng the Baume, on hilles and on dales
The tyme in soth, when Canterburie tales
Complet and tolde, at many sondrie stage
Of estates, in the pilgrimage
Euerichе man, like to his degree
Some of disporte, some of moralitee
Some of knighthode, loue and gentillesse
And some also, of parfite holinesse
And some also, in soth, of ribaudrie
To make laughter, in the companie
Eche admitted, for none would other greue
Like as the Coke, the Miller and the Reue
Iquite hem self, shortly to conclude
Boistously in her termes rude
When thei hadden, well dronken of the bolle
And eke also, with his pilled nolle
The Pardoner, beerdles all his chin
Glasie iyes, and face of Cherubin
Tellyng a tale, to anger with the Frere
As openly, the storie can you lere
Worde by worde, with euery circumstance
Echone iwrite, and put in remembrance
By hym that was, if I shall not faine
Floure of Poetes, throughout all Bretaine
Whiche sothly had, moste of excellence
In Rhetorike, and in eloquence
Rede his makyng, who liste the trouthe finde
Whiche neuer shall, appallen in my minde
But al waie freshe, been in myne memorie
To whom be youe, prise, honour and glorie
Of well seyng, first in our language
Chief Registrer, in this pilgrimage
All that was tolde, forgetyng nought at all
Feined tales, nor thing historiall
With many Prouerbes, diuers and vncouthe
By rehearsaile, of his sugred mouthe
Of eche thyng, kepyng in substaunce
The sentence hole, without variaunce
Voidyng the chaffe, sothly for to saine
Enluminyng, the true piked greine
By craftie writyng, of his sawes swete
Fro the tyme, that thei did mete
First the pilgrimes, sothly euerichone
At Tabarde, assembled one by one
And fro Sothwerke, sothly for to seye
To Canterburie, ridyng on her weye
Tellyng a tale, as I rehearse can
Lich as the hoste, assigned euery man
None so hardie, his biddyng disobeie
And this while, that the pilgrimes leie
At Canterburie, well lodged one and all
I not in sothe, what I maie it call
Hap or Fortune, in conclusion
That me befill, to entre into the toun
The holy sainct plainly to visite
After my sickenesse, vowes to acquite
In a Cope of blacke, and not of grene
On a palfray, slender, long and lene
With rustie bridell, made not for the sale
My man tofore, with a voide male
That of Fortune, tooke myne Inne anone
Where the pilgrimes, wer lodged euerichone
The same tyme, her gouernour the hoste
Stondyng in halle, full of winde and boste
Lich to a man, wonders sterne and fers
Which spake to me, and saied anon dan Pers
Dan Dominike, dan Godfray or Clement
Ye be welcome, newly into Kent
Though your bridle, haue not her boos ne bel
Beseechyng you, that ye will tell
First of your name, and what countre
Without more, shortly that ye be
That loke so pale, all deuoide of blood
Upon your hedde, a wonder threedbare hood
Well arraied, for to ride late.
I answered, myne name was Lidgate
Monke of Burie, nie fiftie yere of age
Come to this toune, to doe my pilgrimage
As I haue night, I haue thereof no shame
Dan Jhon (q he) well brouke ye your name
Though ye be sole, with right glad and light
Praiyng you to Supe, with vs this night
And ye shall haue made, at your deuis

The Prologue.

I greate puddyng, or a rounde hagis
I tranche moile, a taule or a troise
To been a Monke, slender is your toise
Ye haue been sicke, I dare myne hed assure
Of lette sede, in a saint pasture
Left vp your hedde, be glad take no sorowe
And ye would home ride, with vs to morowe
I saie when ye rested haue your till
After soper, slepe will doen none ill
Wrap well your hedde, clothes roundaboute
Strong nottie ale, will make you to route
Take a pilowe, that ye lye not lowe
If nede be, spare not to blowe
To holde winde, be myne oppinion
Will engendre, Colles passion
And make men to grenen on her roppes
When thei haue filled, her mawes & her crops
But toward night, eate some Fenell rede
Annis, Comin, or Coriander sede
And like as I power haue and might
I charge you, rise not at midnight
Though it so be, the Moone shine clere
I will my self, be your Orlogere
To morowe early, when I se my tyme
For we will forthe, parcell afore prime
Accompanie parde, shall doe you good
What looke vp Monke, for by Cockes blood
Thou shalt be merie, who so that say naie
For to morowe, anon as it is daie
And that it ginne, in the East dawe
Thou shalt be bounde, to a newe lawe
At goyng out, of Canterburie toun
And lien a side, thy profession
Thou shalt not chese, nor thy self withdrawe
If any mirthe, be founde in thy mawe
Like the the custome of, this companie
For none so proude, that dare me denie
Knight nor knaue, Chanon, Priest ne Nonne
To tell a tale, plainly as thei konne
When I assigne, and se tyme opportune
And for that we, our purpose wol contune
We will homeward, the same custome vse
And thou shalt not, pleinly thee excuse
Be now well ware, studie well to night
But for all this, be of harte light
Thy witte shall be, the sharper and the bet
And we anon were, to soper set
And serued well, vnto our pleasance
And sone after, by good gouernance
Unto bedde goeth, euery maner wight
And toward morowe, as sone as it was light
Euery pilgrime, bothe bet and worse
As bad our hoste, tooke anon his horse
When the Sonne, rose in the East full clere
Fully in purpose, to come to diner
Unto Ospring, and breake there our faste
And when we were, fro Canterburie paste
Nought the space, of a bowe draught
Our hoste in haste, hath my bridell raught
And to me saied, as it were in game
Come forth dan Jhon, by your christen name
And let vs make, some maner mirth or play
Shete your portes, at wentie deuill waie
Is no disporte, so to patere and saie
It woll make your lippes wonder draie
Tell some tale, and make thereof a iape
For by my Rouncie, thou shalt it not escape
But preache not, of none holinesse
Ginne some tale, of mirthe or of gladnesse
And nodde not, with thine heuie becke
Tell vs some thing, that draweth to effecte
Onely of loye, make no lenger let
And when I sawe, it would be no det
I obeied, vnto his biddyng
So as the lawe, me bounde in all thing
And as I coud, with a pale chere
My tale I gan anone, as ye shall here.

Finitur Prologus de
Thebes.

Et *sequitur quoq; pars*
prima libri.

¶ Here beginneth

the historie of the destruction of the Citee of Thebees.

SIrs ꝙ I, sith of your curtesie
I entred am, into your companie
And admitted, a tale for to tell
By him that hath, power to compell
I meane our hoste, gouernour and guide
Of you echone ridyng here beside
Though that my witte, barein be and dull
I will rehearse, a storie wounderfull
Touchyng the siege and destruccion
Of worthie Thebes, the mightie roiall toun
Built and begonne, of olde antiquitee
Upon the tyme, of worthie Josue
By diligence, of kyng Amphion
Chief cause first, of his foundacion
For which his fame, which neuer shal awaie
In honour floureth, yet vnto this daie
And in storie remembred, is and preised
But how the walles, were on height reised
It is wonder, and marueile for to here
But if you list, I shall you platly lere
The maner hole, platly in sentence
Under supporte, of your pacience
As write myne aucthor, & Bochas bothe two
Rede her bookes, and ye shall finde it so
How this kyng, this prudent Amphion
With his swetenesse, and melodious soun
The citee built, that whilom was so strong
And Armonie, of his swete song
By vertue onely, of the werlbles sharpe
That he made, in Mercuries Harpe
Of whiche the strēges, wer not touched fofte
Whereby the walles, reised were a lofte
Without craft, of any mannes hande
Full yore ago, midde of Grekes lande
Whiche is a thyng, of Poetes told
Neuer isein, nother of yong nor old
But as Bochas, liste to specifie
Clere expounyng, this darke Poesie
Sith Marcurie, God of eloquence
Yafe by the might, of heauenly influence
Unto this kyng, at his natiuite
Through glad aspectes, that he should be
Moste excellent, by craft of Rhetorike
That in this worlde, was none to hym like
Whiche singnifieth to hem that ben prudent
The Musicall, the lustie instrument
I meane the Harpe, moste melodious
Youe to this kyng, by Marcurius
And his song, this aucthour can you teache
Was nothyng, but the craftie speache
Of this kyng, icalled Amphion
Whereby he made, the countrees enuiron
To haue soche luste, in his wordes swete
That were so pleasaunt, fauourable & mete
In her eares, that shortly there was none
Disobeisant, with the kyng to gone
Where so euer, that hym liste to assigne
His chere, his porte, was efte so benigne
That through his steryng, and exhortacion
With hym thei went, first to builde this toun
And forsoke, eche man his countree
By one assent, to make this citee
Royall and riche, that liche was none
And thus the walles, made of lime and stone
Were reised first, by singyng of this kyng
Liche as Poetes, feine in her writyng
Passyng riche, and roiall of entaile
Here maie ye see, how moche maie auaile
The goodlihede, and the lowlinesse of a kyng
And specially, in chere and in speakyng
To his lieges, and to bearen hym faire
In his apporte, and shewe hym debonaire
And not to been, to strange ne solein
In contenaunce outward, be disdein
Whiche causeth oft, who that can aduerte
Greate hatred, in the peoples harte
And there vpon, priuely woll rowne
When a Prince, doeth vpon hem frowne
Shortly deme, for all his excellence
Emong hem self, out of his presence
Euerich conclude, lich his fantasie
And thus full oft, gendred is enuie
In folkes hartes, of soleinte and pride
For soche as list not, ones to looke a side
To reward hem when thei lowe loute
And again kinde, it is out of doubte
That any hede, by recorde of the wise
Should the foote of disdain despise
Which beareth hym vp, who so can take hede
And susteineth, in his moste nede
As his piller, and his suppoaile
For finally, ne were the pooraile
Her bearer vp, and supportacion
Farewell Lordship, and denominacion
Throughout the lande, of euery high estate
Wherefore me semeth, more is fortunate
Of Mercurie, the swote sugred Harpe
Then Mars sweard, whetted kene and sharpe
More accepted, with aspectes good
Then is this God, with his lookes wood

For

What the goodlihed of a prince availeth to winne the hartes of his people.

For humble speache, with glad contenance
Paie a Prince, sothly auence
Emong his people, hartes for to winne
Of inward loue, whiche will not twinne
Then golde, richesse, pride or tyrannie
Other disdaine, daunger or surquedie
For of Lordes, clerkes can reporte
But that loue, her croune doe supporte
The fine is not, in conclusion
I take recorde, of kyng Amphion

Example good of kyng Amphion.

That built Thebes, by his eloquence
Wore then of pride, or of violence
Noble and riche, that like was no wher none
And thus the walles, made of lime and stone
Were reised first, by singyng of this kyng
Like as Poetes feinen, in her writyng

How after thopinion of some authours, king Cadmus builte first the citee of Thebes.

But sothly yet, some exposytours
Groundyng hem, vpon old auctliours
Sain that Cadmus, the famous old man
Full long afore, the citee first began
And the grounde, of buildyng sette
And the boundes, by compas out mette
With thonges out kerue, of a Bulles side
Whiche enuiron, stretche might wide
To get in lande, a full large space
Where vpon to builde, a dwellyng place

How the countree of Boece, tooke first his name of a Bulles skinne, and after called Thebes. And how king Cadmus was exiled out of Thebes, by prowesse of kynge Amphion.

And called was the soile, thus getten in
Whilom Boece, of the Bulles skin
The name after, into Thebes tourned
But Cadmus, hath not there long soiourned
Like in storie, as it is compiled
For shortly, he fro thens was exiled
Neuer after, for to dwell in the toun
By the knighthode, of this Amphion
Whiche vp performeth, riche for the nones
The citee Thebes, of mightie squate stones
As I you told, alite here tofore
And Cadmus, thus his kingdome hath lorne
Sceptre and croune, and his power to all
Now haue I tolde, vnto you ground of all
That ye well knowe, by informacion
Clerely the pith, and the exposicion
Of this matter, as clerkes can you tell
It were but vain, lenger for to dwell
To tary you on this mattere
Sith my tale, whiche that ye shall here
Vpon our waie, will lake a long while
The space in soth, as I suppose of. vii. mile
And now ye knowe, first how Amphion
Builte and began, this citee and this toun
Reignyng there, long after as I rede
Of hym no more, for I will procede
To my purpose, that I first began
Not tellyng here, how the line ran

How the line of Amphion by discente, was conueighed to kyng Laius.

Fro kyng to kyng, by succession
Conueiyng doune, by the stocke of Amphion
Cerioully by line, all the discent
But leue all this, plainly of entent
To tell forthe, in bookes as I rede
How Laius, by procesle gan succede

Here beginneth the storie of Thebes.

O beare the Croune, in this mightie lande
Holdyng the Sceptre, of Thebes in his hande
Manly and wise, duryng all his life
And Iocasta, called was his wife

Now shall ye here of kyng Laius, and Iocasta his wife.

Full womanly, the storie saith certein
For a tyme, though she were barein
Till Laius, in full humble wise
To haue a childe, did Sacrifice
First Cappollo, in his chaire so bright
And Iupiter, that hath so greate a might
Beseechyng hem, with deuoute reuerence
To graunt onely, through her influence
That his request, executed maie be
And specially, to Goddesses three
He besought, Pallas and Iuno
And Diane, for to helpe also
That he be not defrauded, of his boone
And his praier, accepted was full sone
That finally, through his Rites old
Euen like, as his harte would
The Quene Iocasta, hath anone conceiued
Whiche when the kyng, fully hath perceiued
He made in haste, hym list not to abide
Through his kyngdome, messengers ride
Fro coast to coast, the storie can deuise
For Diuinours, and Philosophers wise
For suche as were famous Phisicians

And

And well expert, Aſtronomiens
To come in haſt, vnto his preſens
To finde out, ſhortly in ſentense
By craft onely, of calculacion
The childes fate, and diſpoſicion
And therupon, to peue a iudgement

How the Aſtronomiens, and philoſophers of Thebes, calcled out the fate of Edippus.

The roote I take, at the aſcendent
Truely ſought out, by minute and degre
The ſelf houre, of his natiuite
Not forȝet, the heauenly manſions
Clerely ſearched, by ſmale fraccions
Firſt by ſecondes, terces, and ebe quartes
On Augrime ſtones, and on white cartes
Ipriued out, by diligent labour
In tables correct, deuoide of all errour
Iuſtly ſought, and founde out of bothe two
The yeres collecte, and expauſe alſo
Conſidred ebe, by good inſpection
Euery houre, and conſtellacion
And eche aſpecte, and looke ebe diuers
Whiche were good, and whiche alſo peruers
Where thei were toward, or at debate
Happie, wilfull, or infortunate

The curſed conſtellacion, and diſpoſicion of the heauen, and the natiuitie of Edippus.

And finally, in concluſion
Thei founde Saturne, in the Scorpion
Heauie chered, Malencolike and loth
And wood Mars, furious and wroth
Holdyng his ſceptre, in the Capricorne
The ſame houre, when this childe was borne
Uenus directe, and contrarious
And depreſſed in Mercurious hous
That the dome, and iudgement finall
Of theſe clerkes, to ſpeake in ſpeciall
By fatall forte, that maie not be withdrawe
That with his ſwerde, his fader ſhalbe ſlawe

How the fate of Edippus diſpoſed, that he ſhould ſlea his owne father.

There maie no man, helpe it ne excuſe
On whiche thing, the kyng gan ſore muſe
And caſte he would, on that other ſide
Again her dome, for hymſelf prouide
Shape a waie, and remedie tofore
Bidding the quene, whē the childe wer borne
Without mercie, or moderly pitee
That he be dedde, it maie none other be
And in all haſt, like as he hath ſent
She obeied, his commaundement
With wofull harte, and pitous looke
And face pale, her yong ſonne ſhe tooke
Tender and grene, bothe of fleſhe and bones
To certain men, ordeined for the nones
Fro poinct to poinct, in all maner thyng
To execute, the biddyng of the kyng
Thei durſt not, delaie it nor abide
But to a foreſt, that ſtoode there beſide
Thei token her waie, and faſt gan heim ſpede
The kynges will, to performe in dede
Hauyng thereof, paſſyng heuineſſe
But when that, thei beheldē the faireneſſe
Of the childe, and excellent beautie
In her harte, thei had greate pitie
And plainly caſte, emong hem was no ſtrife
That the child, ſhould haue his life
And anone high vpon a tree
In place, that no man might it ſee
Thei heng hym vp, the ſtorie can reherce
But firſt his feete, thei gan through perce
And on bowes, tender tough and ſmale
Thei knitte hym vp, ſhortely this is no tale
Him to preſerue, from beaſtes wilde and rage
And after that, thei token her viage
Toward Thebes, in all the haſt thei maie
But of fortune, thilke ſame daie
With her houndes, ſearchyng vp and doun
The huntes went, of kyng Polibon
Through the foreſt, gan for to finde
Some aforn, and ſome come behinde
And gan ſearche, and ſehe wondre ſore
Emong the hilles, and the holtes hore
And as thei rengen, the trenches by and by
Thei heard a noiſe, and a pitous crie

How the huntes of kyng Polibon, founde the childe in the foreſte, and preſented hym vnto the kyng.

Of this childe, hongyng on a tree
And all at ones, drough hem for to ſee
And lefte not, till thei haue him founde
And tooke him doune, and his feete vnbounde
And bare hym home, vnto Polibon
Kyng of Archadie, the famous region
And when that he, the childe firſt can ſee
Of his woundes, he had greate pitee
To beholde, his tendre feete ſo blede
And called hym Edippus, as I rede
Whiche is to ſain platly, this is no fage
Bored the feete, as in that langage
And firſt the kyng, in his riall halle
Made his men, a norice for to call
This yong childe, to foſtre and to kepe
With her milke, that he nought ne wepe
And his Leches, he charged eke alſo
Till he were holl, her deuour for to do
Fully in purpoſe, for this childe was feire
After his daie, to maken hym his heire
For cauſe onely, who ſo taketh hede
Sonne had he none, by line to ſuccede

And

And that he had a wife or non
I finde not, and therfore I let it gon
But by proceſſe of daies and of yeres
This Edippus, emong his playing feres
Was in porte paſſyng full of pride
That none with hym might in peace abide
In harte he was ſo inly ſurquidous
Malencolike and contrarious
Full of deſpite, and of high diſdain
That no wight durſt, ſhortly hym withſtain
Till on a daie, he gan with one debate
To whom he had ſpecially greate hate
Whiche of rancour, and of haſtie tene
As he that might, his pride not ſefteine
Gan vpon hym cruelly to braide
And vnto hym felly thus he ſaide
Wherefore arte thou ſo proude of porte
Contraire alſo euery in any diſporte
Froward and fell, laſtyng euery in one
As thou were Lorde, of vs euerichone
And preſumeſt fully in werbyng
Like as thou were ſonne vnto the kyng
And deſcended of his riall blood
But whether ſo thou, be wroth or wood
Thou at nothyng, yiſe thee liſt take hede
Apperteinyng vnto his kinrede
But in a foreſt founden and vnknowe
Whē thou wer yong, therfore beare thee lowe
And vtterly remember thee yiſe thee liſt
Thy birthe and blood, are bothe two vnwiſt
This the fine, ſhortly of my tale
Wherewith Edippus gan to were pale
And chaunge alſo, chiere and countenaunce
And gan apeinte in his remembraunce
Worde by worde, and forgat right nought
And felly muſed in this, and aboue thought
And caſte he would, without more tariyng
The trouthe enquire of Polibon the kyng
And when he ſawe opportune ſpace
And the kyng, in a ſecree place
He hym beſought, lowly on his knee
To his requeſte, benignely to ſe

The requeſte of Edippus, vnto the kyng Polibon.

And that he would plainly, and not ſpare
Of his birthe, the true grounde declare
And make hym ſure, of this thyng anon
Yiſe he were, his very ſonne or non
And Polibon onely of gentilleſſe
When he beheelde, the greate heuineſſe
Of Edippus, and the wofull peine
He gan diſſimule, and in a manere feigne
Liche as he had been, verily his heire
But more and more, he falleth in deſpeire
And dome ayen, on knees gan fall
Hym coniuryng, by the Goddes all
To tell trouthe, and nothyng to hide
Affirmyng ehe, he will not abide
Lenger with hym, but ride and enquere
Till tyme, he maie the verie ſothe lere
In any parte of happe, or of fortune
And for that he was ſo importune
In his deſire, the kyng without abode
Curiouſly tolde hym, how it rode

The anſwere of the kyng, vnto Edippus.

In a forelt firſt, how he was founde
Upon a tree, by the feete ibounde
And how he caſt in concluſion
To make hym kyng of that region
After his daie, ſhortly for to tell
But Edippus, would no lenger dwell
But tooke leaue, and in haſt gan ride
To a temple falle there beſide
Of Apollo, in ſorie as is tolde
Whoſe ſtatue ſtoode, in a chaire of golde
On wheles foure, burned bright and ſhene
And within, a Spirite full vnclene
By fraude onely, and fals illuſion
Anſwere yaſe to euery queſtion
Bringyng the people, in full greate errour
Soche as to hym did fals honour
By rites vſed, in the olde dawes
After the cuſtome of Paganimes lawes
And Edippus, with full humble chiere
To Apollo made his preiere
Beſechyng hym, on his knees lowe
By ſome ſigne, that he might knowe
Through euidence, ſhortly comprehended
Of what kinrede, that he was deſcended
And when Edippus, by greate deuocion
Finiſhed hath fully his oriſon
The fende anone, within inuiſible
With a voice, dredful and horrible
Bad hym in haſte, take his viage
Toward Thebes, where of his linage
He heren ſhall, and be certified
And on his waie, anon he hath hym hied
By haſtie iourney, ſo is his hors conſtreined
Daie by daie, till he hath atteigned
Unto a caſtell, Pilotes icalled
Riche and ſtrong, and wele aboue iwalled
Adiacent by ſight of the countree
And apperteinent, to Thebes the citee
Kyng Laius beyng there preſent
For to holde a maner of turnement
With his knightes, yong and corageous
And other folke, that were deſirous
To preue hem ſelf, ſhortly for to tell
Who that by force, other might excell
Or get a name, through his proweſſe

Eueriche of hem, did his beſinesse
On horſebacke, and eke on foote
Til be that come, founde it full vnſoote
Rather a plaie, of warre then of peace
where Edippus put hymſelf in preace
As he that was aie ready to debate
Enforſyng hym, to entre in at gate
Maugre all tho, that hym would lette
And in the preace, of auenture he mette

How Edippus ſlough his Fader by ignoraunce, at the Caſtell of Phlotes.

Kyng Laius, and cruelly hym ſlough
Though the ſtorie, telleth not hough
Ne no wight can, of all the companie
By no ſigne, it verely aſpie
By whoſe honde, the kyng was ſlawe
For Edippus, gan hym in haſt withdrawe
And kept hym coye, of entencion
Greate was the noiſe, and pitous ſoun
In the caſtell, for ſlaughter of the kyng
Dolle and complaint, ſorowe and wepyng
But for thei ſawe, that heuineſſe a thought
Ayenſt death, auaileth lite or nought
Thei ordeine, with rites full riall
For the feaſt, called Funerall
And eke the cuſtome, of the daies olde
The corps thei brent, into aſſhes colde
And in a veſſell, rounde made as a ball
Thei cloſed hym, in golde and metall
And after that, did her beſte cure
In Thebes, to make a Sepulture
And richely, hem liſt no lenger let
The aſſhes, thei did encloſe and ſhet
Of this mattere, there is no more to ſain
But to Edippus, I will retourne ayen
Whiche hym enhaſteth aie, from daie to daie
Toward Thebes, in all that euer he maie
Brennyng in harte, as hote as any fire
The fine to knowe, of his fatall deſire
But for that he, failed of a gude
Out of his waie, he went ferre a ſide
Through a wilde, and a waſte countre
By a mounteigne, that ſtoode vpon the ſee

How Edippus paſſed by the hill, where the Monſtre laie, that was called Spinx.

where that Monſtres, of many diuers kinde
Were conuerſaunt, in ſtorie as I finde
Emong whiche, ſothly there was one
So inly cruell, that no man durſte gone
For drede of death, forthe by that paſſage
This Monſter was, ſo mortall in his rage
Whiche had alſo, by deſcripcion
Bodie and foote, of a feers Lion
And like a maide, in ſothe was hed and face

The deſtruction of the foule Monſter.

Fell of his looke, and cruell to manace
And odious of contenaunce and ſighe
And as I rede, Spinx that Monſter highe
Worſe then Tigre, Dragon or Serpent
And I ſuppoſe, by Enchantement
He was ordeigned, on the hill tabide
To ſlea all tho, that paſſeden beſide
And ſpecially all, that did faile
To expoune, his miſtie diuinaile
His probleme eke, in wordes plain and bare
Without auiſe, fully to declare
Or with the life, he might not eſcape
This is verie ſothe, plainly and no iape.
And yit that he, by declaracion
Yaue therevpon, clere expoſicion
He ſhould in haſt, there was none other mene
Slaen this Monſtre, for all his cruell tene
There maie of mercie, be none other graunte
But of all this, Edippus ignoraunte
This dredfull hill, ſtondyng a roche
Or he was ware, full nigh gan approche
More perilous platly, that he weande
And ſodeinly, the Monſter gan deſcende
To ſtoppen his waie, and letten his paſſage
Thus abredyng, with a full courage

The wordes of the foule monſter.

Saied, I haue in harte fully greate diſporte
That fortune hath, brought thee to my porte
To make a prike, yif thou maie endure
The fatall ende, of this auenture
Set at a fine, ſothely by daies olde
And by and by, all the caas hym tolde
Chargyng hym, to be wele ware and wiſe
Get the palme, and beare awaie the price
Touchyng this thyng, ſet atwene vs twaine
Of life or death, whiche we ſhall dreine
And this Monſter, with a diſpitous chere
His probleme gan, thus as ye ſhull here.

The probleme that Spinx put to Edippus.

There is a beaſte, merueilous to ſee
The whiche in ſothe, at his natiuitee
Is of his might, ſo tender and ſo greene
That he maie, hymſelf not ſuſteine
Upon his feete, though he had it ſworne
But yif that he, be of his moder borne
And afterward, by proceſſe of age
On ſower feete, he maketh his paſſage
And then vpon three, yif I ſhall not feine
And alderlaſte, he goeth vpright on tweine
Diuerſe of porte, and wonderfull of cheres
Till by length, of many ſondrie yeres
Naturally, he goeth aptin on three
And ſithen on ſower, it maie none other be
And finally, this is the trouthe plein

He recouereth kindely ayen
To the matter, whiche that he came fro
Lo here my probleme, is all ido
Muse herevpon, without warre of strife
Jt to declare, or els lese thy life
And when Edippus, can this thing aduerte
Well assured, in his manly harte
Gan in his harte, serche vp and doun
And of prudence, cast in his reason
By greate auise, what thing this maie be
Seyng also, that he maie not flee
And how there was, counsaill nonne rede
To tell trouthe, or els to be dede
And by full good deliberacion
Thus he answered, in conclusion
Thou Spinx (q he) false and fraudolent
Thou foule Monstre, thou dragō, thou serpēt
That on this hill, like as J conceiue
Liest in a waite, folkes to deceiue
But trust well, for all thy sleghtie witte
Thy false fraude, shall anon be quitte
Me liste not to whispre, neither roune
But thy probleme, J shall anon expoune
So openly, thou shalt not go there fro
Lo this it is, take good heede thereto

How Edippus expouned the probleme, that Spinx put vnto hym.

Thilke beast, thou spake of her toforne
Js euery man, in this worlde iborne
Whiche maie not go, his limmes be so soft
But as his moder, beareth hym a loft
In her armes, when he doeth crie or wepe
And after that, he ginneth for to crepe
On lower feete, in his tender youth
By experience, as it is ofte couth
Aforne irekened, his handes bothe two
And by processe, thou maiest conslider also
With his two feete, for all thy fell tene
He hath a staffe, hymself to susteine
And then he goeth, shortly vpon three
And alderlaste, as it must nedes be
Voidyng his staffe, he walketh vpon tweine
Till it so be, through age he atteine
That luste of youth, walked be and spent
Then in his honde, he taketh a potent
And on three feete, thus he goeth ayen
J dare afferme, thou maiest it not withsein
And sone after, through his vnweldie might
By influence, of natures right
And by experience, as euery man maie know
Like a childe, on lower he crepeth lowe
And for he maie here, no while soiourne
To yearth ayen, he must in haste retourne
Whiche he came fro, he maie it not remewe
For in this worlde, no man maie eschewe
This verie sothe, shortly and no doubt
When the whele of kinde, cometh about
And naturally hath, his cours ironne
By circuite, as doeth the shere sonne
That man and child, of high and lowe estate
Jt gaineth not, to make more debate
His tyme isette, that he must fine
When Atropos, of malice doeth vntwine
His liues thred, by Cloto first compouned
Lo here thy probleme, fully is expouned
At euery metyng, as J tooke on honde
To the lawe, that thou must nedes stonde
And in all haste, of myne hondes deie
For of reason, thou canst it not withsteie
And this Spinx, a waped and amate
Stoode all dismaied, and disconsolate
With chere doun caste, heauie as any ledde
And Edippus anone, smote of the hedde
Of this fende, stinkyng and vnswete
And the countre, set holly in quiete
Whereby he hath, suche a price wonne
That his fame, in euery coast is ronne
Through al the lond, ẏ this mōstre was slawe
And line right, to Thebes he gan drawe
Well receiued, for his worthinesse
For his manhode, and his prowesse
And for thei seigh, he was a semely knight
Well fauoured, in euery mannes sight
And sawe also, Thebes, the mightie toun
Not onely thei, but all the region
Were destitute, of a gouernour
Ayen her foon, hauyng no succour
Hem to defende, but the Quene a lone
Emong hem self, makyng full greate mone
For there was none, as bookes specifie
The Sceptre and croune to occupie
For whiche the Lordes, all by one assent
Within the toune, set a parlement
Shortly concludyng, yif it might been
Prudently to treate with the Queen
Namely thei, that helde hem self most sage
To condescende, by weie of mariage
She to be ioyned, to this manly knight
Passyng prudent, and famous eke of might
Most holle man, as thei can discerne
The worthie citee, to kepe and gouerne
And through counsaill, of the lordes all
To her desire, plainly she is fall
And accorded, without more tariyng
That of Thebes, Edippus shall be kyng
By full assent, was none that saied naie
And tyme set, ayein a certain daie
Emong hem self, and finally deuised
The weddyng was, in Thebes solempnized
Full rially, that nedes must vnthriue

Onely

Onely for he, his moder tooke to wiue
Unwill of bothe, he was of her blood
And ignoraunt, shortely how it stood
That he tofore, had his fader slawe
For which this wedding, was ayeinst ỹ lawe
And tofore God, is neither faire ne good
Nor acceptable, blood to touche blood
Whiche cause hath be, of greate confusion
In many a londe, and many a region
Ground and roote, of vnhap and mischaunce
The fine concludyng, alwaie w vengeaunce
As men haue sein, by clere experience
And holy writte, recordeth in sentence
How Herode falsly, in his life
By violence tooke, his brothers wife
For she was faire, and pleasant to his sight
And kept her still, by force through his might
Although to her, title had he non
And for her sake, the holy man sainct Jhon
For his trouthe, in prison losse his hedde
Wherefore I rede, euery man take hede
Whether so he be Lorde, Prince or kyng
That he beware, to eschue soche weddyng
Ere ỹ the swerde of vengeance, him manace
Lest he lese happe, fortune and grace
Takyng ensample, in all maner thyng
Of Edippus, in Thebes crouned kyng
All be that he, wrought of ignoraunce
Full derke and blinde, of his wofull chaunce
And yit vnwitt, that he of innocence
As ye haue herde, fell in soche offence
For whiche he was punished, & brought lowe
What ar thei worthie, that her errour knowe
And from the knotte, list not to abstein
Of soche spousaile, to God and man vnclene
I can not sein, ne more thereof deuise
Demeth your self, that prudent been & wise
And ehe Edippus, haueth emong in minde
Of whom the weddyng, like as ye maie finde
Unhappie was, and passyng odious
Infortunate, and ehe vngracious
I am werie, more thereof to write
The hatefull processe, also to endite
I passe ouer, fully of entent
For Imeneus, was not there present
Nor Lucina, list not there to shine
Ne there was none, of the Musas nine
But one accorde, to maken melodie
For there song not, by heauenly armonie
Neither Clio, ner Caliope
None of the sustren, in nomber thrise three
As thei did, when Philolaie
Ascended vp hegh, aboue the chie
To be wedded, this Ladie vertuous
Unto her Lorde, the God Mercurius
And as Patrician, inamed de Capelle
In his booke of weddyng, can you telle
There concludyng, in his mariage
The Poete, that whilom was so sage
That this Ladie, called Sapience
Iwedded was, vnto Eloquence
As it sat well, by heauenly purueiaunce
Hem to be ioyned, by knot of alliaunce
But bothe two, sothly of entent
At weddyng, in Thebes were absent
That caused after, greate aduersitie
For finall ende, of that solempnitie
Was sorowe and wo, and destruccion
Utter ruine, of this roiall toun
There maie no man, helpe it ne succour
For a tyme in ioye, though thei floure.

The names of the people, being at the wedding of the kyng Edippus, and of Jocasta the Quene.

But at his weddyng, plainly for to tell
Was Cerberus, chief porter of hell
And Herebus, fader to Hatred
Was there present, with his holle kinred
His wife also, with her browes blacke
And her doughters, sorowe for to make
Hidously chered, and vgly for to see
Megera, and Theliphonee
Alecto eke, with Labour and Enuie
Drede, Fraude, and false Tretcherie
Treason, Pouert, Indigence and Nede
And cruell death, in his rent wede
Wretchednesse, Compleint, and ehe Rage
Fearfull, Pale, Dronkenesse, croked Age
Cruell Wars, and many a Tigre wood
Brennyng Ire, and vnkinde blood
Fraternall hate, depe set in the roote
Sauf onely Death, that there nas no boote
Assured othes, at fine Untrewe
All these folke, were at weddyng newe
To make the toune, desolate and bare
As the storie, after shall declare
But aie in Thebes, with his walles strong
Edippus reigneth, many a daie and long
And as myne author, write in wordes plain
By Jocasta, he had sonnes twain
Ethiocles, and also Polimite
And in bookes, as sondrie clerkes write
Doughters twoo, full goodly on to see
Of whiche that one, hight Antigonee
And that other, called was Imein
Of her beautie, inly souerein
Edippus aie, deuoide of warre and strife
With Jocasta, ledde a merie life
Till fortune, of her iniquitie
Had enuie, of his prosperitie

For when he wone, moste riche in his renoun
From her whele, she plunged hym adoun
Out of his ioye, into sodein wo
As she is wonte, frowardly to do
And namely hem, that setten her affiaunce
Of hartely trust, in her variaunce
For when the kyng, passyng of greate might
Sat with the quene, vpon a certain night
Casuelly, when his folke echone
Out of chamber, sodeinly were gone
Ere he was ware, Jocasta gan beholde
The carectes of his woundes old
Upon his feete, empzented wonder depe
Tournyng her face, brest out for to wepe
So secrely, he might it not espie
And she anon, fell into a fantasie
Aie on this thing, musyng more and more
And in her bedde, gan to sighen sore
And when the kyng, conceiueth her distresse
He gan enquere, of her heuinesse
Fully the cause, and thoccasion
For he will wite, in conclusion
What her eileth, and why she ferde so
My Lorde (q he) without wordes mo
Percell cause of this sodein rage
Is for that I, in my tender age
Had a Lorde, inamed Laius
Kyng of this toune, a man right vertuous
By whom I had a sonne, right wonder feire
Likely to been, his successour and heire
But bicause his Diuinours tolde
At his birthe, sothlie that he should
yif he had life, by fatall destinee
Slaen his fader, it might none other be
For whiche the kyng, his fate to eschue
Bad men in haste, as hym thought due
To slea the childe, and haue thereof no rothe
And I anon, bad without slothe
To certain men, vp pein of iudgement
To execute, the commaundement
Of the kyng, as I yaue hem in charge
And forthe thei goon, to a forest large
Adiacent, vnto this countree
Perlyng his feete, and henge hym on a tree
Not performyng, therecucion
On hym thei had, soche compassion
Lefte hym there, and resorted home ayen
Beyng in doubt, and vncertein
At their repeire, as thei tolden all
Of this childe, what afterward is befall
Sauf thei said, huntes had hym founde
Which ladden him forth, & his fete vnbounde
But to what coaste, thei coud not declare
Whiche percell is, of myne euill fare
Grounde and cause, of myne heuie chere
Considered ebe, the woundes that appere
Upon your fete, & wot not what thei mene
And o thyng aie, is at myne harte grene
My Lorde alas, but of newe date
Kyng Laius slaine, was but late
At a Castell, nigh this countree
Upon your comyng, into this citee
All this iweied, and reuened into one
Maketh myne harte, as heauie as a stone
So that I can, counseill none ne red
And with that word, the king lift vp his hed
And abreide, with sharpe sighes smerte
And all this thing, by order can aduerte
Curiously by good auisement
And by signes, clere and euident
Conceiueth well, and sore gan repent
It was hymselk, that Jocasta mente
And when the kyng, sigh in maners pleine
By her Goddes, she gan hym constreine
To shewe out the cause, of his affraie
And it exponne, and make no delaie
Croppe and roote, shortly why that he
Entred first, into that countre
From whēs he came, and from what region
But he her put, in delusion
As he had doen it, for the nones
Till at laste, he brast out at ones
Unto the Quene, and gan a processe make
First how he was, in the forest take
Wounded the feete, and so forthe euery thing
Of his cherisshyng, with Polibon the king
And holle the cause, why he hym forsoke
And in what wise, he the waie toke
Toward Thebes, as Apollo bad
And of fortune, how that he was lad
where that Spinx, kept the mounteine
And how that he also, slowe in certeine
Kyng Laius, at castell gate
Toward night, when it was full late
And how to Thebes, that he gan hym spede
To finde out the stocke, of his kinrede
whiche vnto hym, gan were couth
For by processe, of his grene youth
He founde out wele, by rekenyng of his life
That she was bothe, his moder and his wife
So that all night, and tuyng on the morowe
Betwene hem twoo, began a newe sorowe
whiche vnto me, were pitous for to tell
For therebpon, yif I should dwell
A long space, it would you occupie
But ye maie rede, in a Tregedie

Tragediæ Senece de Ægipto Reg. Thebax.

Of Moral Seneke, fully his endyng
His dooll, his mischief, and his compleinyng

How

How with sorowe, and vnweldie age
This Edippus, fell in dotage
Loste his witte, and his worldly delite
And how his sonnes, had hym in despite
And of disdaine, tooke of hym no kepe
And eke bookes saine, his iyen out he wepe
And as myne aucthour, liketh to deuise
As his sonnes, rebuke hym and despise
Upon a daie, in a certaine place
Out of his bedde, his iyen he gan race
And caste at hem, he can none other boote
And of malice, thei trade hym vnder foote
Fully deuoide, bothe of loue and drede
And whē Edippus, for mischief was thus ded
Within a pitte, made in the yearth lowe
Of crueltie, his sonnes gan hym throwe
Worse then Serpent, or any Tigre wood
But of cursed stocke, cometh vnkinde blood
As in storie, ye maie rede here toforne
Al by though the Rose, grow out of the thorn
Thus of Edippus, whē he was blind and old
The wretched ende, I haue you plainly told
For whiche shortly, to man and childe I rede
To be wele ware, and take hede
Of kindely right, and of conscience
To doe honour, and due reuerence.

How euery man ought of duetie, to doe reuerence to his Fader and Moder, or elles there will fall vengeaunce.

To fader and moder, of what estate thei bee
Or certain els, thei shull neuer thee
For who that is not, to hem debonaire
In speache, in porte, for to treate hem faire
Hem to obeie, in honestie and drede
And hem to cherishe, of what thei haue nede
I dare afferme, exceptyng none estate
That he shall firste, be infortunate
In all his werke, bothe on Sea and londe
And of what thyng, that he take on honde
For the tyme forward, to hym and contraire
Waste of his goodes, plainly and appaire
Finde plentie of conteke, warre and strife
Unhappie ende, and shortnesse of life
And gracelesse, of what he hath to do
Hatred of God, and man also
Therefore no man, be thereof recheles
But make your mirrour, of Ethiocles
And his brother, called Polimite
Whiche in soche thinges, greatly wer to wite
As ye shall here, of hem how it fill
And when we been descended, doun this hill
As I passed here, the lowe vaile
I shall begin, the remnaunt of my tale.

Explicit prima pars istus Codialli.

Immediate sequitur secunda pars eiusdem.

Passed ẏ Thrope, of Brough ton on the blee
By my Kalender, I gan anon to see
Through the Sonne, that full clere gan shine
Of the clocke, that it drew to nine
And sawe also, as siluer dropes shene
Of the dewe, like perles on the grene
Vapoured vp, into the aire a lofte
When zepherus, with his blowyng soft
The weder made lustie, smothe and faire
And right attempre, was the holsome aire
The same houre, all the holle route
Of the pilgrimes, ridyng round aboute
In my tale, when I gan procede
Rehearsyng forthe, as it was in dede
When Edippus, buried was and graue
How his sonnes, the kyngdome for to haue

How the soonnes of Edippus, debated for the croune.

Emong hem self, by full mortall hate
For the croune, gonne for to debate
Whiche of hem, iustly shall succede
And the Scepter, of the toune possede
Auertyng nought, neither to right ne wrong
But eche of hem, to make his partie strong
And his querele, proudly to susteine
From whose hartes, was deuouided clene
Of brotherhode, the faithfull aliaunce
False couetise, so made hem at distaunce
Fully werchyng, into destruccion
And ruine of this noble toun
So hote brente, of hatered and enuie
Of bothe twoo, through pompous surquedie
That neither would, pleinly in a poincte
Other forbeare, thei stode in soche disioinct
Like as thei had, of birthe been foreins
Till of the toune, the noble citezeins
Knightes, Barōs, with many a worthy lorde
Shope a waie, to make hem of accorde
And to set hem, in quiete and in pees
But for his parte, this Ethiocles
Alledge gan, that he was first borne
For whiche he ought of reason, go toforne
In the citee, to be crouned kyng
Sith by lawe, there was no lettyng
For vnto hym, longeth the heritage
By descente, and by title of age

The controuersie of the twoo brethren.

But Polimite, of full high desdaine

All openly, gan replie againe
And for his parte, saied in especiall
Reason was none, that he should haue all
Bothe Regalie, and dominacion
And the lordship, holly of the toun
And he right nought, out of the citee
But liue in sile, and in pouertee
Concludyng, without fere or drede
Rather then it suffre, he would be dede
And thus Alas, through her enuious strife
At ende, eueriche loste his life
At greate mischief, as ye shall after here
But thilke tyme, the Lordes all in fere
Full besily did, her diligence
By greate auise, and full high prudence
To set hem in quiete, and in reste
Counsailyng hem, plainly for the beste
To leue her strief, of wisedome and of reason
And condescende, to some conclusion
Whiche to bothe, might moste auaile
And finally, through her gouernaile

The common vnion, betwene these twoo brethren.

The Lordes all, tho beyng present
Haue hem brought, to been of one assent
Of one harte, as brother vnto brother
Eueriche of hem, to reigne after other
yere by yere, as it cometh about
So that the toun, shall absent hym out
Fully that yere, and hymselfe gie
By his manhode, and his chiualrie
Haunte hymself, in deedes Marciall
While his brother, in his Se riall
Holdeth his Sceptre, the citee to gouerne
And when the yere, his cours hath run yerne
And is come out, he shall haue repeire
To reigne in Thebes, like as Lorde and heire
There to receiue, fully his dignitee
while that other, voideth the citee
Paciently, takyng his auenture
Till he ayen, his honour maie recure
Thus enterchaunge, euery yere thei shall
That one ascendeth, that other hath a fall
Thei muste obeie, of harte and take it well
Like as that one, resorteth of the wele
For this was holle, the composicion
Betwene the brethren, and conuencion
Fully knitte vp, by greate auisement
To forze the Goddes, by othe of Sacrament
Neuer after to grutche, ne to varie
But accomplishe, shortely and not tarie
Like as thaccorde, enrolled in the toun
From poinct to poinct, made mencion.
But alderfirst, by reason of his age
Ethiocles had the auauntage
To reigne alone, and weare the croune
Polimite, hym hastyng out of toune
Duryng that yere, it maie none other be
whiles his brother, satte in his rialte
Full richely, vpon Fortunes whele
And rode hym forthe, armed bright in stele
This Polimite, sothly as I rede
Hymself alone, on a riall stede
Without guide, all the long daie
Beyng aferde, to kepe the high waie
In his harte, hauyng suspecion
To his brother, of malice and treason
Leste he pursue, through fals & vnkind blood
To haue hym dedde, for couetise of good
That he alone, might haue possession
Duryng his life, fully of the toune
For whiche in haste, hauing no felaw
Polimite a side, gan him withdrawe
By a forestе, ioynyng to the See
Knowing right nought, the site of the countre
Full of hilles, and of high Monteines
Craggie Roches, and but fewe pleines
Wondre dredfull, and lothsome of passage
And therewithall, full of beastes rage
Holding his way, of hert nothyng light
Mate and wery, til it draweth to night
And al the day, beholding enuiron
He neither sawe, Castel Toure ne toun
The whiche thing, greueth him ful sore
And sodenly the see, began to rore
Winde and tempeste, hydously tarysle
The raine doun bete, in full grilly wise
That many a beste, therof was adrad
And nigh for fere, gan to were made
As it sempte, be the woful sownes
Of Tygres, Beres, Bores, and Liones
whiche for refute, hem selfe for to saue
Euerich in haste, draweth vnto his Caue
But Polymite, in this tempest huge
Alas the while, findeth no refuge
Ne him to shrowde, saw nowhere no succoure
Til it was passed, almoste midnight houre
A large space, that the sterres clere
The cloudes voided, in heuen did appere
So that this knight, out of the forest large
Gan approche, in to the londe of Arge

How Polimite first cam in to the londe of Arge

Seyng a palaice mighti of building
Of whiche Adrastus, called was the king
A lusty man, riche and wondre sage
And yronne was, sondel in to age
Borne of the Ile, that called is Chison
And somtime Sone, of the king Cholon
And for his witte, in story as is couthe
He cholen was, in his tendre youthe

Of

Of Arge to be, crouned king
Chief of al Grece, be recorde of writing
Not be descente, nor succession
And but alonely, of free election
He helde of Arge, the Sceptre in his hande
As moste worthy, of al Grekes lande
Loued and drad, for wisdom and Justice
And as the story, pleinly can deuise
This worthy king, had doughtres two
Passing faire, and right good also
It were to longe, her beaute to descriue

Argiue and Delphile the Doughtres tweine of king Adrastus

And the eldest, called was Argiue
Delphile, ynamed the seconde
And Adrastus, like at it is founde
This worthy, king hadde sonne none
To succede, astre he begone
For whiche he was, during al his life
Trifle in herte, and passingly peinlife
But holy his truste, and his hope stood
Be alliance, of som worthy blood
Brought in be mene, of his Doghtres tweln
That he shalbe, released of his peine
Through recomfort, of som high Mariage
And sothely yet, ful ofte in his corage
He troubled was, be occasion
Of a sweuene, and of a vision

The dreame of king Adrastus of a wilde Boor and a fers Lion

Shewed to him, vpon a certein night
For as him thought, his inward sight
While he slepte, by clere inspection
A wilde Boor, and a fers Lion
Possede shul, these bestes in her rage
His doughtres two, be bonde of Mariage
In short tyme, within a certein day
Whiche brought his herte, in ful great affray
But thinge in soth, that destine hath shape
Here in this worlde, ful harde it is teschape
And merueilous, a man to eschue his fate
And polimite, of whom I spake late
With the tempest bete, and all be reined
Be grace onely, the Citie hath atteigned
Where Adrastus, ful stately of degree
Thilke time helde, his riall se
The trouble night, merke and obscure
Hath brought this knight, onely be auenture
Through the Citie, enclosed with a wal
Unto the palaice, chief and principal
Where as the king, in his chambre alofte
Lay in his bed, and slepte wonder softe
The al his folke, hadde her chambres take
Like as Fortune, parauenture had shape
The silse tyme, because it was so late

And casualy, the porter at gate
As it hadde be, right for the nones
And in a porche, bilte of square stones
Ful mightely, enarched enuiroun
Where the domes, and ples of the toun
Were executed, and lawes of the king
And ther this knight, without more taryng
Wery and mate, from his stede a light
Hanging the reine, in al the haste he might
Upon his arme, sure him for to kepe
And leide him doun, and gan anon to slepe
As him semed, that tyme for the beste
And while that he, lay thus for to reste

Of auenture, ther cam a knight riding
One the worthiest, of the world liuing
Curteis, lowely, and right vertuous
As saith min Auctour, called Tideus
Urous in armes, and mauly in werking
Of his birthe, Sonne vnto the king
Of Callidoine, a londe of great renoun
As he alas, out of that region
Exiled was, for he his brothre slow
As the stage of Thebes, writ the manere how
Al be that he, to him no malicement
For on a day, as they on hunting went
In a forest, for herte and for hinde
So as he stood, vndre a great linde
And casuely lete, his Arwe slippe
He slough his brothre, called Menalippe
Through mortal sorte, his hand was begiled
For whiche he was, banished and exiled
As the lawe narowe, sette his charge
As for this cas, he cam firste to Arge
Into the porche, where polimite dyd slepe
Of auenture, er he toke any hepe
The same night, hidously belein
With the tempest, of thondre and of rein
And felt also, anoy and great damage
Through the forest, holding his passage
As polimyte, had do to some
In percel ofte, likly to be lorne
With bestes rage, sette on euery side
Til of grace, without any guide
He Rode Through Arge, the gret mighty toun
Streght vn to the palaice, & to the chief don-(geon
Like as I tolde, wher polimite lay
And at his coming, made a great affray
For he was blinde, Through derkenesse of the (night
And him to guie, he ne fonde no light
Whan he cam in, of priuet ne of torche
Til he vnwarely, entred in to the porche
And wolde haue take, there his herbergage
But polimite, sterte vp in a rage
Sodenly awaked, as I rede
With the niyng, of his proude stede

And firſte of al, whan that he beheld
A knight iarmed and on his breſt aſhelde
And gan the manere, of this ray aduerte
Of herray ire, vpon his hors he ſterte
And cruelly gan, Tideus enquere
Whens he come, and what he did there
And bad in haſte, his anſwere to deuiſe
And Tideus, in ful humble wiſe
Anſwered ayen, of herray gentilleſſe
And ſaide in ſoth, of high diſtreſſe
Of the tempeſte, and the derke nighe
He driuen was, like an arrant knight
Of nede onely, and great neceſſite
And him conſtrained, of great aduerſite
To take lodging, where ſo that he might
And in that Court, therfore he alight
Without more, thinking none outrage
Ne to no wight, meaning no damage
Thanne Polimite, of malice and of pride
Tolde him ſhortely, he ſhulde not abide
Ne lodge there, though he hadde it ſworne
For I (q he) toke it vp before
And wil it kepe, duringal this night
I ſey the platly, maugre al thy might
(q Tideus) than, it is no curteſie
Me to deuoide, but rather vilenie
Yet ye take hede, that ſeme a gentil knight
And as I ſuppoſe, ye haue no title of right
To this lodging, be waye of heritage
More than haue I, for al your fel rage
And parde yet, it ſhal be no diſeaſe
Til to morwe, though ye do me eaſe
Of gentilleſſe, onely with youre leue
To ſuffre me, it ſhal but litel greue
But aye the more, Tideus ſpeake faire
Polimyte was froward, and contraire
And ſhortely ſaith, it geineth not to ſtriue
That of force, he ſhal deuoide bliue
Or vtterly atwene hem bothe two
This thing to trie, he muſte haue do
And Tideus ſeing, no bettre mene
Ful like a knight, in ſtele armed clene
Without abode, faſte gan him ſpede
Wonder lyuely, for to ſtride his ſtede
And thus theſe knightes, pompous and elate
For litel cauſe, fellen at debate

How Tideus & Polimite ſtriuen for her lodging

And as they ronne, togider on horſbacke
Either on other, firſt his ſpere brake
And aftre that, ful furquedous of pride
With harde ſwerdes, they togider ride
Full irouſly, theſe mighty Champions
In her furie, like Tegres or Lions
As they hurtel, that al the palaice ſhooke
And king Adraſtus, out of his ſlepe wooke
And made in haſte, his Chamberleins calle
And throught ỹ Courte, his worthy knightes
Commanding hem, to deſcende and ſee (all
And reporte, what it might be
Thys wonderful noice, in his Court be night
And whan hey ſegh, twoo ſtraunge knightes
In plates thicke, and in brigh tmaill (tight
Without Judge, they hadde great meruaill
And were diſmaied, of this vncouth thing
And as they founde, tolde to the king
And Adraſtus, for derkeneſſe of the night
From his chambre, with many torches light
In to the Courte, is deſcended doun
All his meine ſtonding enuiron
Of theſe knightes hauing great wonder
And of manhode, he put hem firſt a ſonder
Hem commanding, like a gentil king
To leuen her ſtrif, and ceſſen of fighting
And entred in, with a knightely loobe
And firſt frō hem, her ſwerdes bothe he tooke
Iſſerming eke, as to his fantaſie
It was a rage, and a great folie
So wilfully, her liues to iuparte,
Without en Judge, her querel to departe
And ſpecially, in the derke night
When neither might, of other haue ſight
Charging hem, vp peine of her life
So diſſeuere, and ſtynten of her ſtrife
And tho Tideus, in al the haſte he might
Ful humbly from his ſtede a light
And right mekely, with cher and contenaūce
Putte him holly, in the gouernaunce
Of Adraſtus, in al manere thing
And Polimite eke, made no tariyng
To highe him alſo, and wolde not with ſeye
The kinges bidding, lowly to obeye
So as him oughte, with due reuerence
And as they ſtoode, bothe in his preſence
He gan enquere, firſt of her eſtate
The cauſe alſo, why they were at debate
Of her Countrees, ſothely and her age
And aſked hem eke, touching her linage
Be deſcente, of what ſtocke they were born
And Tideus, his anſwere yaue before
Tolde pleinly, and made no leſing
How he was ſone, vnto the king
Of Calcidoine, and rightful heire therto
And of his exile, the cauſe he tolde alſo
As ye haue herd in the ſtorie rad
And Polimite, with chere and face ſad
Vnto the king, touching his Countree
Said he was born, in Thebes the Citee
And Jocaſte, the great famous quene
His modre was, without any wene
But of his fader, whilom king and lorde

For

For veray shame, he spake neuer a worde
Onely, for yit I shal not feine
His fadre was, and brother, bothe tweine
The which in soth, he was full loth to telle
And eke the king, wolde him not compele
Of gentillesse, but bad withoute blame
Of his birthe, for to haue no shame
For holly the caas, he knew euery dele.
Touching his kinne, he knew ỹ grounde full (wele
Like as it was, be ful cleere reporte
Enforsing him, for to doe comforte
With al his might, and al his besy peine
This manly king, to these knightes tweine
And to hem said, before him as they stood
He wiste wel, that of ful worthy blood
They were descended, touching her kinred
And made in haste, his officers lede
The straunge knightes, being at debate
Through his palaice, to chambre of estate
Eche be him self, for to take his ease
And euery thing, in soth ỹ might hem please
Was offred hem, like to her estates
And whan they were disarmed of her plates
Culsshens, Greues, and her Sabatons
Her Harneis voided, and her Habergeons
Two mantels, vnto hem were brought
Frette with perle, and riche stones wrought
Of clothe of golde, and Violet crimsin
Ful richely furred with Ermin
To lappe hem in, ayens the colde morowe
Afere the rage, of her nightes sorowe
To take her reste, til the sonne arise
And whan the king in ful prudent wise
First of al, he was not rebeles
The knightes hertes, for to sette in pees
That euer aftre, I dare afferme it wele
Eche was to other, trew as any stele
During her life, bothe in worde and dede
Undre a knotte, bounde of brotherhede
And Adrastus the worthy king famous
A feste made, riche and plenteous
To these knightes, him self therat present
And aftre mete, full goodly he hath sent
This noble king, for his doughtres dere
Of gentillesse, for to make chere
To the knightes, come fro so ferre
And like in soth, as Lucifer the sterre
Gladeth the morowe, at his vprising
So the ladies, at her in coming
With the stremes, of her eyen clere
Goodly apporte, and womanly manere
Contenaunces, and excellent faireneſſe
To al the Courte, broughten in gladneſſe
For the freschenesse, of her heuenly cheres
So agreable was, vnto the straungeres
At her entree, that in especial
Hem thought it like a thing celestial
Enhasting hem, in full knightly wise
Ayenst hem goodly to arise
And as they mette, with humble contenaũce
Ful conningly did her obseruaunce
Hem conueying, in to her sitting place
But sothely, I haue leiser none ne space
To reherse, and putte in remembraunce
Holly the manere, of her daliaunce
It were to longe, for you to abide
But wel I wot, that the god Cupide
Be influence, of his mighty honde
And the feruence, of his firy bronde
Her meeting first, fortuned hath so wele
That his arowes of golde, and not of stele
Yperced han, the knightes hertes tweine
Through the breste, with soche a lusty peine
That ther abode, sharpe as spere or launce
Depe yfixed the point af remembraunce
Whiche may not lightly rased be away
And thus in ioye, they driue forth the day
In ply and reuel, for the knightes sake
And toward night they her chambre take
At due time, as her fadre bad
And on her weie, the knightes hem lade
Reuerently, vp be many a staire
Taking leue, gan anon repaire
To her lodging, in ful stately a Tour
Assigned to hem, by the herbeiour
And aftre spices, pleinly, and the wine
In Cuppes great, wrought of golde ful fine
Without taryng, to bedde straight they gon
Touching her reste, whether they slepe or non
Demeth ye louers, that in soch maner thing
By experience, haue fully knowleching
For it is not declared, in my booke
But as I finde, the king al night wooke
Thoughtful in herte, the stories specifies
Musing sore, and ful of fantasies
First aduerting, the great worthinesse
Of these knightes, and the semelinesse
Her lusty youthe, her force, and her manhode
And how they were, come of rial blode
And this he gan, to reuolue aboute
And in his hert, hauing a manere of doubte
Atwene two, hanging in a balance
Whether he should make, an alliance
Atwen his doughtres, & the knightes tweine
For one thing ay, his herte gan constreigne
The remembraunce, of his auision
Of whiche toforne, made is a mencion
Touching the Lion, and the wilde Boore
It nedeth not, to reherse it no more
Casting al way, in his fantasie

What it might clerely signifie
This derke dreame, that was hid and clos
But on the morowe, Adrastus vp aros
And to the Temple, the right weye he toke
And gan praie, deuoutely on his booke
To the goddes, of his dreme to specifie
And they him bede, homwarde for to hie
And to beholde in the knightes sheeldes
The sel bestes, peinted in the feeldes
Whiche shal to him, be cleer inspeccion
Ful pleinly make declaracion
Of his dreme, whiche he hadde on the night
And Adrastus, enhasted him ful right
In her sheldes, wisely to beholde
Wher that he sawe, as the goddes tolde
In the sheeldes, hanging vpon hookes
The bestes rage, with her mortal crokes
And to purpos, like as write Bochas
Polimyte ful streite enbraced was
In the hide, of a fers Lioun
And Tideus, aboue his Habergeoun
A gipoun hadde, hidous sharper and hoor
Wrought of the brisseles, of a wilde Boor
The whiche bestes, as the story leres
Where wrought, and bete vpon her baneres
Displaide brode, whan they should fight
Wherfore the king, whan he hadde a sight
At his repaire, in hert was ful glad
And with a face, ful demure and sad
With his lordes, that he aboute him hadde
To the temple, he the knightes ladde
And whan they hadde, with al circumstances
Of Rites olde, doon her obseruaunces
Home to the Courte, they retourne ayein
And in hall, riche and wel besein
This worthy king, of herte liberal
Made a feste, solempne and rial
Whiche in deintees, surely did excelle
But it were vein, euery cours to telle
Her straunge sewes, and other sotiltes
Ne how they sat, like her degrees
For lacke of tyme, I let ouer slide
And after mete, Adrastus tooke a side
The knightes two, and like a prudent man
In secree wise, thus his tale he gan

How Adrastus spake to the two knightes in secree touching the mariage of his doughtres

Sirs (quod he) I ne doubte it nought
That it is freshe & grene, ay in your thought
How that first, by goddes ordinaunce
And after nert, through fates purueiance
And be werking, of fortunes honde
Howe ye were brought, in to this londe
Bothe tweine, but now this laste night
Of whos comming, I am full glad and light
First in my selfe, shortly to expresse
Whan I consider, and see the liklynesse
Of youre persones, with the circumstances
And holle the manere, of your gouernaunces
Seyng ful wel, wherto should I feigne
Ye ben likely, herafter to atteinge
To great estate, and habundance of good
Through your birthe, and your rial blood
Ye may not faile, but ye haue wrong
For ye are bothe manly, and right strong
And for to sette your hertes more at reste
My purpos, is I hope for the beste
So that in you, be no variance
To make a knotte, as be alliance
Atwene you, and my doughtres two
Yif your hertes, accorde wele therto
And for I am fully in despeire
To succede, for to haue an heire
Therfore ye shal haue possession
During my life, of halfe my region
Forth with in honde, and al aftre my day
Ther is no man, that therto shal say nay
And sothely aftre, whan that I am graue
Eche of you, shal his part haue
Of this kingdom, as I haue prouided
This is to say, it shal be diuided
Atwene you two, euerich to be crouned
Your proparties, be equite compouned
So egaly, in euery mannes sight
That eche of you, reioce shal his right
And in youre witte, ye shall the lond amende
And of manhod, knightly it defende
Ayens oure enemies, and our mortal foon
And for the dayes, passed ben and goon
Of my desires, and my lusty youthe
I am ful sette, for to make it couthe
That ye shal haue, like min opinioun
The gouernaunce, of al this Regioun
To this entent, me semeth for the beste
Ye to gouerne, and I to liue in reste
Fully to folowe, the lufte of my desires
Hunte and hauke, in wodes and riuers
Whan so euer, I haue therto pleisance
And for to haue, non other entendance
Unto nothing, but to mine ease
For whiche shortly, yif it agree and please
That I haue said, to you that ben so wise
And be according, vnto your auyse
Delaieth not, but in wordes plein
That you semeth, yeue answere ayen
And whan Adrastus, hadde his tale fined
Tideus with hed, ful lowe enclined
As he that was, a veray gentil knight
With his power, and his ful might
Ful humbly, thanked the king

Touching

Touching his profre, and so hegh a thing
And for his partie, saide he wolde assente
Fully of herte, neuer to repente
To al that euer, the king hath saide
And Polimyte, was also appaide
In the story, as it is comprehended
On euery parte fully, is holle descended
The kinges wille, to fulfille in dede
From point to point, and ther vpon procede
Whether so that euer, they winne or lese
And Tideus, made his brother chese
Of gentillesse, and of curtesie
Which that was most, to his fantasie
Of the Sistres, for to haue to wiue
And he in soth chosen hath Argyue
Whiche eldest was, ful womanly to se
And Tideus toke Deiphile
Of her beaute most souereigne excellent
Adrastus throughout, his lond hath sent
For his lordes, and his Baronage
To be present at the mariage
Of the knightes, and make no letting
And they echone, come at his bidding
In goodly wise, meke and ful benigne
Ayein the day that he did assigne,
And thidre come, ful many a lusty knight
Ful wele besein, and many a lady bright
From euery coste, and many a fresshe squier
The storye seith, and many a communer
To beholde, the great rialte
And the manere, of this solempnite
But to telle al the circumstaunces
Of iustes reuel, and the diuerse daunces
The festes riche, and the yeftes greate
The peineful sighes, and the feruent hete
Of loues folke, brenning is the glede
And deuise of many a solein wede
The touches stole, and the amorous lokes
By sotel crafte, leide out lines and hokes
The Jelous folke, to traien and begile
In their a waites, with many a fondry wile
Al this in soth descryuen I ne can
But wele I, the new fame ranne
This mene while, with ful swifte passage
Unto the Thebes, of this mariage
And be reporte trewe, and not feigned
Tho whan therof, the eares hath atteigned
Mine Auctour writte, of Ethiocles
Touching the honoure, and the great encres
Of Polymite highly magnified
And that he newly, was allied
With Adrastus, in the londe of Arge
The whiche thing, he gretly gan to charge
Dreding inly, that this Mariage
Shal aftre time, tourne to his damage
Sore musing, and casting vp and doun
The great power, and the hight renoun
Of Adrastus, the whiche of Grekes lond
Hadde al thē power, soget to his hond
Lest that he, for Polymytes sake
Wolde vpon him, a new werre make
But yif that he, like the conuencioun
At time sette deliuer vp the coun
To his brother, be bonde of othe sworn
And by couenaunt, assured here toforn
Yif ye remembre, late as I you tolde
Whiche he was not in purpos for to holde
But for his beste, caste him for to varie,
And thervpon, liste no lenger tarie
Liche his desires, to shape remedies
And firste he sent, for his next allies
In whom he hadde, his most affiaunce
For his lordes, that hadde gouernaunce
Of his kingdom, to come to him anon
And whan they weren, present euerychon
He saide pleinly, wening for the beste
That is herte, shal neuer be in reste
But in sorowe, and in a manere of dred
Til is brother vtterly be ded
That he in Thebes, in his rial sete
Might alone regne in quiete
He ment him self, shortely and none other
Unpertourbed, of Polimite his brother
And at his conseil diuerse of entent
I finde writen, thre folkes were present
Some in soth that faithful were and trew
And some also, that can change of new
And other eke that betwene tweine
Couertly coude vndre coloure feigne

Commendacion of trouth.

The first seide, aboue al thing
Trouth should longe vnto a king
Of his worde, not be variable
But plein & hool, as a contre stable

How trouth is preferred in the book of Esdre aforn, kinges, women, and wine.

For trouth first, withoute any wene
Is chief piller, that may a king susteine
In ioye and honoure, for to lede his life
For trouthe somtyme, hadde a prerogatife
As of Esdre, the booke can specifie
Recorde I take, of prudent Neemye
That worthy kinges, for al her great pride
Wine, and woman, ben eke sette aside
With al power, and dominacion
Hauing reward, in comparison
To trouthes might, and trouthes worthines
For as Esdre, pleinly doth expresse
Who so taketh lede, in the same place
The influence sothely, and the grace

Of trouth alone, this olde Neempe
Gatte him licence, to reedifie
The wales newe, of Hierusalem
Whiche is treasure chief of euery Realme
For Salomon write, howe ỳ thinges tweine
Trouth and mercy, linked in a Cheine

Trouth and mercy preseruen a king from al aduersite.

Preserue a king, like to his degre
From al mischief, and al aduersite
Alas therfore, that any doublenesse
Variaunce, or elles vnlikernesse

Chaunge nor doublenesse shoulde not be in a king.

Change of worde, or mutabilite
Fraunde or disceipte, or instabilite
Soulde in a king, haue domination
To causen after, his destruction
Of kinges redeth the storie doun by rowe
And seeth how many, haue ben ouertrowe
Through her falsched, from fortunes whele
For vnto God, it pleseth neuer adele
A king to be double, of entent
For it may happe, that the worlde is went
Ful ofte sithe, by sleight of her werking
But thus the trouth, God seeth in euery thig
Right as it is, for ther may be no cloude
Toforne his sight, trouth for to shroude
It may be clipsed, and derked be deceipte
By false engine, ligging in a weite
As a serpent, for to vndermine
But at last, it wil cleery shine
Who ỳ saith nay, and shew his bright bemes
For it in soth, of kingdomes and of realmes
Is bearer vp, and conseruatrice
From al mischief, and sothfast mediatrice
To God aboue, who so list to se
To kepe a king, in prosperite
On euery side, as I affermedar
For whiche ye kinges and lordes, beeth wele
Your beheftes, iustely for to holde (war
And thenketh how Thebes, with his walles
Destroied was platly, this is no les (olde
For the doublenesses, of Ethiocles
That with his people, sore after bought
Onely for that he, nat by conseil wrought
Of hem that were, both trew and wise
Him list not werke, by her auise
But lefte trouth, and sette his fantasie
To be gouerned, be fals flaterie

The conseil of fals flatereres.

That bad him thinke, how he was a knight
And to holde of force, more than of right
During his life, the lordship of the toun
And not to lese, his possession
For no bonde, nor hestes made tofore
But let his brother, blowe in an horn
Where that him liste or pipe in a rede
This was the conseil, platly and the rede
Of soche as liste not, to say the sothe
But falsely flatre, with her woordes smothe
And whan they hadde holle, her tale fined
Ethiocles fully, is enclined
Whose euer theratte, laughe or wepe
Like her conseil, possession to kepe
Who that saith nay, grutcheth ther ayein
Him to contraire, him thought was but vein

How the pere was come out that Ethiocles regned in Thebes.

But in this wile, that the sheene sonne
The .xii. signes, rounde aboute ronne
Sith Ethiocles, by iuste rekening
In Thebes was crouned, lord and king
Holding the Sceptre, and the Diademe
That by reson, as it wolde seme
The time was ful complete, and the space
Of couenante, he should voide is place
And Polymite eke, his iourney make
Toward Thebes possession to take
Of due title, but he hadde wrong
Whiche thought in sothe, ỳ pere was wonder long
Of his exile, or that it come aboute
And for he hadde in hert, a maner of doubte
Lest in his brother, were falsehed founde
To aquite him self like as he was bounde
To Adrastus, he gan declare his herte
Beseching him, this matere to aduerte
And therupon, to yeue conseill sone
Touching his right, what was best to done
Whether it were best, to go or to abide
Or like a knight, manly to ride
Hym self alone, and make no message
For to chalenge his rightful heritage
Withinne Thebes, either be pees or strife
And therupon, to ieoperde his life
Thus was he sette, for al his fers brother
But Adrastus, sothely thought another
Bet was to sende, then him self to gon
Lest he were trapped, among his mortal fon
Hauing his brother, suspect in this caas
That by fraude, or be some fallas
He wolde werke, to his destructioun
Yif he were hardy, to entre in to the toun
For whiche he bad him, prudently take hede
Fully concluding, how it were more spede
That some other, be to Thebes sent
To perceiue, fully thentent
Of Ethiolus inward by some signe
And yif that he, his croune wil resigne
For thilke yere, like as he made his oth
And whan he knew, how his purpos goth

Ther

Thereupon to werken, and procede
And thus Adrastus, wisely gan hym rede.

How Tideus tooke vpon hym, to doo the message of Polimite his brother.

And while thei treate, vpon this matere
Tideus with a manly chere
Saied vtterly, for his brothers sake
This message, he would vndertake
With holle themprise, of thenbassiate
Were it welefull, or infortunate
He will not spare, what soeuer betide
But Adrastus, on that otherside
And Polimite in conclusion
Were contraire, to that opinion
And saied sothly, as hem thought right
Sith that he was, so well a priued knight
And descended, of so worthie blood
That thei nolde, for none yearthly good
For all Thebes, with the regalitie
Put his bodie, in soche ieopardie
But al this thing, auaileth him right nought
For he will forthe, how dere that it bought
Takyng leaue, first of all thestates
And armed hym in maill, and sure plates
And shope hym foorthe, vpon his fournie
Who made then sorowe, but Deiphile.

The sorowe of Deiphile, when Tideus went, toward Thebes the citee.

With bitter teares, dewed all her face
Full ofte sithes, swounyng in the place
Trist and mournyng, in her blacke wede
And when she sawe, that he tooke his stede
So inwardly, encrease gan her mone
Seyng her Lorde, so ridyng forthe alone
Vpon his waie, this worthie Tideus
And in all haste, the storie telleth vs
He spedeth hym so, makyng no delaies
That in the space, of fewe daies
The high toures of Thebes, he gan see
And entred is into that citee
Wisely enquiring, where the palaice stoode
And like a knight, thider streight he rode
Marked full well, in many a mannes sight
Like Mars hymselfe, in stele armed bright
Till he atteined hath, the chief dongeon
Where as the kyng, helde his mansion
And through the palaice, w a knightly looke
Into the hall, the right waie he tooke
From his stede, when he light a doun
Not aferde, but hardie as Lion
Where as the kyng, with lordes a great route
In the hall sittyng, rounde aboute
He entred in, moste manfull of courage
To execute the fine, of his message
And as hym thought, conuenient and due
Full connyngly, he gan the king salue
Requiryng hym, of kyngly excellence
In goodly wise, to yeue hym audience
And not desdaine, neither in porte ne chere
Sith he was come, as a messagere
From Polimite, his owne brother dere
Ginnyng his tale, thus as ye shall here.

How wisely and how knightly Tideus did his message.

Quod he, vnto your worthinesse
My purpose is, briefly to expresse
Theffecte holly, as in sentement
Of the message, why that I am sent
It were in vein, long proces to make
But of my mattere, the verie grounde to take
In eschuyng, of prolixitie
And voide awaie, all superfluitie
Sith your self, best ought to vnderstonde
The cause fully, that we haue on honde
And eke conceiue, thentent of my meanyng
Of right wisenesse, longyng to a kyng
First considred, if that ye take hede
When Edippus, the olde kyng was dede
How that your self, and your brother bliue
For the croune, contagiously gan striue
As mortall foen, by full greate hatrede
Whiche of you twoo, should first succede
Till that ye were, by meanes reconsiled
Ye to reigne, and he to been exiled
Out of this toune, for a yeres space
And then ayein, resorte into his place
To reigne as kyng, and ye to voiden out
So as your tourne, by processe cometh about
Eueriche of you, pacientlye tendure
Thentrechaungyng, of his auenture
Who were put out, or stoode in his estate
Therevpon, to make no debate
Liche the couenaunt, and conuencion
Enrolled vp, by lordes of the toun
Whiche of reason, maie not be denied
Sithen ye haue, a yere occupied

The requeste that Tideus made, in the name of Polimite, vnder the title of conuencion.

Polimite requireth, you of right
To acquite you, as a true knight
In eschuyng, of mortall warre and strife
Sith ye had, a prerogatife
As eldest brother, for to reigne aforne
And thinketh how, that ye arn sworne
Your othe to kepe, and make no tariyng
Holly aduertyng, liche a prudent kyng
That trouth is more, in comparison
Then all the treasour, of your region
More acceptable, vnto God and man

Then all the richesse, that ye reken can
Wherefore in haste, and let there be no slouth
Quiteth your self, iustely in your trouth
Unto your brother, auoidyng this citee
And let hym reigne, in his roiall See
The croune of Thebes, a yere to occupie
Then will all Grece, preise and magnifie
Your high renoun, and maie saie none other
But ye acquite you, iustely to your brother
This holle theffecte, of all that I will sain
Answere expectant, what ye will send ayain
When Tideus, had tolde his tale
Ethiocles triste, and wonder pale
His conceipte first, in maner hath refreigned
Dissimulyng, vnder colour feigned
Shewyng a chere, in maner debonaire
To his entente, wonderly contraire
Inward in harte, wood and furious
Tournyng his face, toward Tideus
He gan abreide, and at laste out spake
And euen thus, vnto hym he spake.

The answere of kyng Ethiocles.

I haue greate merueile (q̃ he) in my thouzt
Of the message, whiche that thou hast brouzt
That my brother, as thou hast expouned
Desireth so, in Thebes to be crouned
Hauyng reward, to thabundance
The greate plentie, and the suffisance
That he hath now, with the kyng of Arge
That me semeth, he should little charge
To haue Lordship, or dominion
In the boundes, of this little toun
Sith he reigneth, so freshly in his floures
Surmountyng, all his predecessours
By newe encreace, through fortunes might
Wherefore in harte, I am right glad & light
Fully trustyng, if I had nede
To his helpe, that without drede
Like a brother, that I should hym finde
To meward faithfull, true and kinde
Supposyng plainly, euermore
Of this reigne, he set but little store
Nor casteth hym not, for so short a while
As for a yere, his brother to exile
To liue in pouertee, and in greate distresse
He will not suffer it, of his hegh noblesse
It were no token, of no brotherhede
But a signe rather, of hatrede
To interrupte my possession
Of this little poore Region
All that he spake, who so coud aduarte
Of verie scorne, rooted in his harte
As hem sempte, the storie can you teache
By the surplus, sothly of his speache
He might no lenger, hym restreine
But plainly saied, as betwene vs twene
I meane thus, Polimite and me
There is no bonde, nor surete
Ne faith imade, that maie hem auaile
As he claimeth, to yeue the gouernaile
Of this citee, neither yere ne daie
For I shall let hym, sothly if I maie
That he shall not, by title of his bonde
Reioyse in Thebes, halfe a foote of londe
Let hym kepe, that he hath wonne
For I purpose, as I haue begonne
To reigne in Thebes, hensforthe all my liue
Maugre all hem, that therayen striue
And in despite, of his frendes all
Or the counsaile, that hym list to call
Let hym be sure, and knowe this right well
His manasyng, I drede neuer a dell
And sikerly, as to my deuise
It sheweth well, that thou art not wise
But suppressed, with a manere of rage
To take on thee, this surquedous message
And presumest to doe, so high offence
So boldely to speake, in my presence
But all in fere, auaile shall right nought
For the tithynges, that thou hast brought
Shall vnto hym, by disencreas
He better were, to haue been in peas
Then of folie, and presumpcion
Ayenst me, to seche occasion
For I liue, and thereto here myne honde
As I saied erst, he winneth here no londe
While the wall, of this toun maie stonde
For plainly, I doe thee to vnderstonde
That thei shull first, be beate doun full lowe
And all the toures, to the yearth ithrowe
Ere he in Thebes, haue any thing a do
Lo here is all, retourne and saie hym so.
When Tideus sawe, the feruent ire
Of the kyng with angre, set on fire
Full of despite, and of Malencolie
Conceiuyng eke, the greate felonie
In his apporte, like as he were wood
This worthie knight, a little while stood
Sad and demure, ere he would ought sain
But at laste, thus he saied ayen.

The knightly answere, that Tideus yaue ayein to the kyng.

Certes (q̃ he) I conceiue of newe
Aboute thee, thy counsaile is vntrewe
I dare it sain, and vowe it at beste
Ne thou art not faithfull, of thy beheste
Stable of thy worde, ẏ thou hast said toforne
But deceiuable, and falsely eke forsworne
And eke periurate, of thine assured othe
But whether so be, that thou be lefe or wroth

I saie thee shortly, holde it for no sage
All this shall tourne, vnto thy damage
Triste it well, and in full cruell wise
All Grekes londe, shall vpon thee arise
To be auenged, and manly to redresse
The greate vntrouth, and the hegh falsnesse
Which ẏ thou hast, ayein thy brother wrouzt
It shall full dere, after this be bought
And verily in deede, as thou shalt lere
Kyng Adrastus, will medle in this matere
And all the Lordes, about hym enuiron
That bounden be, to his subieccion
Princes, Dukes, and many a noble knight
In susteinyng, of thy brothers right
Shall on a daie, with spere and with shelde
Ayenst thee, be gadred in a feelde
Knightly to preue, all by one assent
That thou art fals, and double of entent
Of thy promes atteint, and eke outraied
And leue me well, it shall not be delaied
But in all haste, execute in deede
Like thy deserte, thou shalt haue thy meede
For God aboue, and his right wisenesse
Soche open wrong, shall in hast redresse
And of his might, all soche collusion
Reforme ayein, and all extorcion
For this the fine, falshode shall not vaille
Ayens trouthe in felde, to holden battaille
Wrong is croked, bothe halte and lame
And here anon, in my brothers name
As I that am, his next allie
At his querele, shortly I defie
Fully auised, with al myne holle entent
And ye Lordes, that been here present
I you require, of your worthinesse
To saie trouthe, and beare witnesse
When tyme cometh, and iustely to recorde
How your kyng, falsely can discorde
From his heste, of false variance
And thinke on how ye, of faith and ligeance
Are bounde echone, ye maie not go there fro
For to obeie, and serue bothe two
This next yere, now anon folowyng
As to your Lorde, and to your true kyng
Polimite, though he be now absent
By iuste accorde, made in Parlement
At your deuise, whiche sitten here a rowe
Engrossed was vp, as it is well knowe
And enrolled, onely for witnesse
In your Registers, to voide all falsnesse
That none of you, varie maie of newe
From that I saie, but if he be vntrewe
For whiche I rede, your self to acquite
Let no tyme lenger, lie in respite
But at ones, without more tariyng
Of manly force, fet home your kyng
Maugre his fone, like as ye are bounde
And let in you, no slothe be sounde
To put hym iustly, in possession
This is my counsaill, in conclusion.

How manly Tideus departed frō the king.

When Tideus, had his message saied
Like to the charge, that was on hym laied
As he that liste, no lenger there soiourne
Fro the kyng, he gan his face tourne
Not a stonied, nor in his harte aferde
But full proudely, laied honde on his swerde
And in despite, who that was lief or loth
A sterne pace, through the hall he goth
Through the courte, and manly toke his stede
And out of Thebes, fast gan hym spede
Enhastyng hym, till he was at large
And sped hym forth, toward the lond of Arge
Thus leue I hym, ridyng forthe a while
Whiles that I, retourne ayein my stile
Unto the kyng, whiche in the hall stoode
Emong his Lordes, furious and wood
And his harte wrothe, and euill apaied
Of the wordes, that Tideus had saied
Specially, hauyng remembrance
On the proude, dispitous defiance
Whiles that he sat, in his riall See
Upon whiche, he would auenged be
Full cruelly, what that euer befall
And in his ire, he gan to hym call
Chief Conestable, of his Chiualrie
Chargyng hym, faste for to hie
With all the worthie chois, of his housholde
Soche as he knewe, moste manfull and bolde
In all haste, Tideus for to sue
To fore or he, out of his londe remue
Up peine of life, and lesyng of her hedde
Without mercie, anon that he be dedde.

How falsely Ethiocles laied a busshement in the waie, to haue staine Tideus, in his repaire.

And of knightes, fiftie were in nomber
Mine aucthor saieth vnwarely, him to cōber
Armed echone, in maile and thicke stele
And therewithall, ihorsed wonder wele
At o posterne, forthe thei gonne to ride
By a gein pathe, that laie out a side
Secrely, that no man hem aspie
Onely of treason, and of felonie
Thei hast hem forthe, all the long daie
Of cruell malice, for to stoppe his waie
Through a forest, all of one assente
Ful couertly, for to laie a busshemente
Under an hill, at a straite passage
To fallen on hym, at more auauntage

Thesame waie, that Tideus gan drawe
At thilke mounte, where ẏ Spinx was slawe
He nothyng ware, in his opinion
Of the compassed conspiracion
But innocent, like a gentill knight
Rode aye forthe, till it drowe to night
Sole by hymself, without companie
Hauyng no man, hym to wise or guie
But at laste, liftyng vp his hede
Toward eue, he gan to take hede
Mid of his waie, right as any line
Thought he sawe, ayenst the Moone shine
Sheldes freshe, and plates burned bright
The whiche enuiron, caste a great light
Imagenyng, in his fantasie
There was treason, or conspiracie
Wrought by the kyng, his iourney for to lette
And of all that, he nothyng sette
But well assured, in his manly harte
Liste not ones, a side to diuarte
But kept his waie, his sheeld vpon his breste
And caste his spere, manly in the reste.

Whē worthie Tideus outraied fiftie knightes, liyng in awaite for to slaen hym.

And the first, platly that he mette
Through the bodie, proudely he hym smette
That he fell dedde, chief maister of hem all
And then at ones, thei vpon hym fall
On euery paas, by compas enuiron
But Tideus, through his high renoun
His bloodie swerde, let about hym glide
He sleth and killeth, vpon euery side
In his ire, and his mortall tene
That meruail it was, how he mizt so sustene
Ayenst hem all, in euery halfe be set
But his swerde, was so sharpe whet
That his fomen, founde it full vnsoote
But he alas, was made light on foote
By force grounded, in full greate distresse
But of knighthode, and of high prowesse
Up he rose maugre all his fone
And as thei came, he slough hem one by one
Like a Lion rampant, in his rage
And on this hill, he fonde a narowe passage
Whiche that he tooke, of full heigh prudence
And liche a Bore, stonding at his defence
As his fomen, proudely hym assaile
Upon the plein, her blood he made to raile
All enuiron, that the soile waxe redde
Now here now there, as thei fellen dedde
That here laie one, and there laie two or thre
So mercilesse, in his crueltee
Thilke daie he was, vpon hem founde
And at ones, his enemie did confounde
Where as he stoode, this mightie champion
Beside he sawe, with water tourned doun
An huge stone, large, rounde, and square
And sodeinly, ere that thei were ware
As it had lien, there for the nones
Upon his foen, he rolled it at ones
That ten of hem, wenten vnto wracke
And the remenaunt, amased drewe a backe
For one by one, thei went to mischance
Thus finally, he brought to outrance
Hem euerichone, Tideus as bliue
That none but one, left of hem a liue
Hymself ihurte, and iwounded kene
Through his harneis, bledyng on the grene
The Theban knightes, in cōpas round about
In the valey slain, all the holle rout
Whiche pitously, again the Moone gape
For none of hem, shortely might eschape
But dedde echone, as thei haue deserued
Sauf one excepte, the whiche was reserued
By Tideus, of this entencion
To the kyng, to make relacion
How his knightes, haue on her iourney sped
Eueriche of hem, his life left for a wedde
And at metyng, how thei haue hem borne
To tellen all, he assured was and sworne
To Tideus, full lowly on his knee
By whiche ensample, openly ye maie see.

How trouth with little multitude, hath euer in the fine, victorie of falshode.

Ayens trouthe, falshode hath no might
Figh on querels, not grounded vpon right
Without whiche, maie be no victorie
For euery man, haue this in memorie
That greate power, shortely to conclude
Plentie of good, or greate multitude
Sleight or engine, force or felonie
Arne to feble, to holde a champertie
Ayenst trouth, who that liste take hede
For at ende, falsshode maie not spede
Tendure long, ye shall finde it thus
Recorde I take, of worthie Tideus
That arted his honde, through trothes excellēce
Fiftie knightes slough, in his defence
But one excepte, as I late tolde
Sworne and assured, with his hand vpholde
The kyng tenforme, how thei were atteinte
And Tideus of bledyng, was wonder feint
Mate and wearie, and in greate distresse
And ouerlaied, of verie feblenesse
But as he might, tho hymself sustene
He tooke his hors, stondyng on the grene
Worthed vp, and forthe he gan to ride
An easie paas, with his woundes wide
And sothly yet, in his opinion
He was alwaie, a ferde of treason

But

But anguisshous, and full of beste peine
He rode hym forthe, till he did atteine
Into the boundes, of Ligurgus londe
A worthie kyng, and manly of his honde

How Tideus all to wounded, came into Ligurgus londe.

And he full pale, onely for lacke of blood
Tideus sawe, where a Castell stood
Strong and mightie, builte vpon a roche
Toward whiche, faste he gan approche
Conueighed thider, by clerenesse of the stone
That by night, ayens the Moone shone
On heigh toures, with crestes Marciall
And ioynyng, almoste to the wall
Was a gardein, little out beside
Into whiche, Tideus gan to ride
Of aduenture, by a gate small
And there he fonde, for to rekenall
A lustie Erber, vnto his deuise
Swete and freshe, like a Paradise
Merie heauenly, of inspeccion
And first of all, he a light adoun
The goodly place, when that he beheldc
And from his necke, he voided hath his sheldc
Drewe the bridell, from his hors hedde
Let hym go, and tooke no maner heede
Through the gardein, that enclosed was
Hym to pasture, on the soote gras
And Tideus, more heauie then is Ledde
Upon the herbes, grene white and redde
As hym thought, that tyme for the beste
He laied hym doune, for to take his reste
Of wearinesse, desirous to slepe
And none awaite, his bodie for to kepe
And with dreames, grudged euer emong
There he laie, till the Larke song
With notes newe, heigh vp in the aire
The glad morowe, rodie and right faire
Phebus also, castyng vp his beames
The heigh hilles, gilte with his streames
The siluer dewe, vpon the herbes rounde
There Tideus laie, vpon the colde grounde
At vprisse, of the sheue Sonne
And stoundemell, his grene woundes ronne
Rounde aboute, that the soile depeint
Was of the grene, with the redde meint

How Ligurgus doughter, found Tideus sleping in the herbere, all forwounded.

And euery morowe, for holsomnesse of aire
Ligurgus doughter, did make her repaire
Of custome aye, emong the floures newe
In the gardein, of many a diuers hewe
Soche ioye had she, for to take hede
On her stalkes, for to seen hem spredc
In the alures, walkyng to and fro
And when she had, a little while go
Her self alone, castyng vp her sight
She beheldc, where an armed knight
Laie to reste hym, on the herbes colde
And hym beside, she gan eke beholde
His mightie steede, walkyng here and there
And she anon, fell in a maner fere
Specially, when she sawe the blood
Spradc on the grene, aboute there she stood
But at laste, she caught hardinesse
And womanly, gan her for to dresse
Toward the knight, hauyng a maner drede
And greate doubt, lest that he were dedde
And of her will, for thy this was chief
That she thought, for to make a prief
How that it stoode, of this man full ofte
And forthe she goeth, and toucheth hym softe
Where as he laie, with her hondes smale
And with a face, dedly bleike and pale
Liche as a man, a dawed in a swough
He vp sterte, and swerde drough
Not fully out, but put it vp ayein
Anone as he hath, the Ladie sein
Besechyng her onely, of her grace
To haue pitee, on his trespace
And rewe on hym, of her womanhede
For of a fraie, he was fall in drede
Lest he had been, assailed of newe
Of the Thebans, preued full vntrewe
For drede of whiche, he was so rebeles
Full humbly, hym yeldyng to the pees
Trist in himself, ẏ he passed had his boundes
And when ẏ she sawe, his mortall woundes
She had routh, of herie gentillesse
Of his disease, and his distresse
And bad he should be, nothyng dismaied
Nor in harte, sorifull nor affraied
Discomforte hym, in no maner thyng
For I (qᵗ she) am doughter to the kyng
Called Ligurge, whiche greatly me delite
Euery morowe, this gardein to visite
It is to me, so passingly disporte
Wherefore (qᵗ she) beth of good comforte.

How womanly the Ladie aquitte her, to Tideus in his disease.

For no wight here, touchyng your viage
Shall hinder you, ne doe you no damage
And if ye liste, of all your auenture
The plain trouthe, vnto me discure
I will in sothe, doe my besinesse
To reforme, your greuous heuinesse
With all my might, and holle my diligence
That I hope, of your greate offence
Ye shall haue helpe, in your aduersitee
And as ferforthe, as it lith in me

Trusteth right well, ye shall no faute finde
And when he sawe, that she was binde
So womanly, so goodly and benigne
In all her porte, by many a diuers signe
He vnto her, by order will not spare
His auentures, fully to declare
In Thebes first, touchyng his message
And at hill, of the woodie rage
Of his woundes, and of his hurtes sore
It were but vain, to reherce it more
By and by, he tolde it euery dele
The whithe in sothe, she liked neuer a dele
But had routhe, and compassion
Of his mischief, wrought by false treason
Ridyng in haste, that he should her sue
And womanly, as her thought due
To a chamber, she ledde hym vp a lofte
Full well besein, there in a bed right softe
Richely abouten, apparailled
With clothe of golde, all the floure irailled
Of the same, bothe in length and brede
And first this Ladie, of her womanhede
Her women did bid, as goodly as thei can
To be attendant, vnto this wounded man
And when he was, vnarmed to his sherte
She made first washe, his woundes smerte.

How Tideus was refreshed, in the Castell of the Ladie.

And serch hem well, w diuers instrumētes
And made sette sondrie ointementes
And Leches eke, the best she coud finde
Full craftely, to staunche hym and to binde
And euery thing, that maie doen hym ease
To swage his peine, or his wo tapese
was in the Courte, and in the Castell sought
And by her bidding, to her chamber wrought
And for his sake, she hath after sent
For soche deintees, as were conuenient
Moste nutritife, by Philikes lore
Hem that were seke, or wounded to restore
Making her women, eke to taken kepe
And awaite on hym, on nightes whē he slepe
And be well ware, that no thing a starte
That was or might, be lustie to his harte
And with all this, she praied hym abide
Till he were strong, and mightie for to ride
In the Castell, to plaie hym and disporte
And at leiser, home ayein resorte
when he might, by welde hym at his large
But all for nought, he will home to Arge
Tooke his leue, on the next daie
Without abode, to haste hym on his waie
Lowly thankyng, vnto her goodnesse
Of her fredome, and bounteous largesse
So womanly, that her liste take hede
Hym to refreshe, in his greate nede
By hotyng her, with all his full might
He would be her seruaunt, & her true knight
whyle he liueth, of what she will him charge
And forthe he rode, till he come to Arge

How Tideus, repeired is home to Arge.

In full great hast, & would no where dwel
But what should I, reherse either tell
Of his repaire, the costes or the pleines
The greate roches, or the high Monteines
Or all the manere, of his home comyng
Of the metyng, nor the welcomyng
Nor the ioye, that Adrastus made
Nor how his suster, or his wife were glad
Nor how that thei, wherto should I write
Enbraced hym, in her armes white
Nor the gaderyng about hym, or the prees
Nor the sordwe, that Polimites
Made in hymselfe, to se hym sore wounded
His greuous hurtes, his sores eke vnsounded
His dedly loke, and his face pale
Of all this, to gimme a newe tale
It were in sothe, a maner idelnesse
Nor how hymself, in order did expresse
First how that he, in Thebes hath hym borne
Ne how the kyng, falsely was forsworne
Nor of thawaite, nor treason that he sette
when fiftie knightes, on the waie him mette
As ye haue herde, all the manere how
Without whiche, my tale is long inow
But Adrastus, made men to seache
In euery coste, for many a diuers Leache
To come in haste, and make no tariyng
Upon a peine, by biddyng of the kyng
To doen her crafte, that he were recured
And of his force, in euery parte assured
And thei echone, for her connyng shewe
That in space, of a daies fewe
He was all holle, made of his sickenesse
There was tho ioy, & then was ther gladnesse
Throughout the court, & through al the toun
For euery man, hath soche opinion
In Tideus, for his gentilesse
For his manhode, and his lowlinesse
That he was hold, the moste famous knight
And beste beloued, in euery mannes sight
Throughout Grece, in euery region
But now must I, make a digression
To tell shortly, as in sentement
Of thilke knight, that Tideus hath sent
Into Thebes, onely to declare
Of the greate mischief, and the euill fare
Unto the kyng, how it is befall
The open trouthe, of his knightes all
How Tideus, hath slain hem euerichone.

That

That saue him selfe, there escaped none
Which was reserued, frō shedīg of his blood
The king to telle pleinly how it stood
And whan he hadde reherced euery point
Ethyocles stood, in soche disioynt

How Ethiocles lore was aconied, whan he herde the death of his knightes.

Of hateful Ire, he were nigh wood
And in his teche, and in his fel mood
Of cruel malice, to the knight he spake
And felly seide, that it was for lake
Onely of manhode, & throughe her to wardise
That they were slain, in so mortal wise
And hanged be he, highe be the nechē
That of your death, or of your slaughter recke
Or you compleine, either one or alle
Of the mischief, that is you befalle
I do no force, that none of you asterte
But figh vpon, your fals coward herte
That o knight, hath throughe his renoun
Brought you alle, to confusion
Ful graceles, and ful vnhappy to
Nay (q this knight) it is nothing so
It is thin vnhappe, pleinly and not oures
That so many, worthy warriours
Whiche al her lyfe, neuer hadde shame
Excepte this querele, taken in thy name
That grounded was, and rooted on falsenesse
This was cause, in verray sothnesse
Of our vnhappe, I wot wele, and none other
With thine vntrouthe, don vnto thy brother
And that thou were, so openly forswore
And percel cause, why that we were lorn
Was fals breking of thine assured oth
And tho the king, madde almoste for wroth
In purpos was, for to sle this knight
Onely for he, saide vnto him right
The whiche alas, bothe at eue and morowe
Suppressed was, with a dedly sorowe
Renning ay, in his remembrance
With the pitous, and vnhappy chance
Of the great mischief, and misauenture
Touching the death, and discomfiture
Of his fieres, and of him selfe also
That the shamefast importable wo
So was on him, with soche a mortal strif
That he was wery, of his owne life
Hent he hath a swerd, and a side sterte
And roue him self, euen to the herte
The king him self, being tho present
And the rumour, and the noise is went
Throughe Thebes, of the wood rage
By soche as weren, ioyned by linage
To the knightes, slaine at hille
That all at ones, of one herte and wille
They wold haue arisen, throughout the Cite
Upon the king, auenged for to be
Whiche of her death, was chief occasion
But the Barons, and lordes of the toun
Ful besy were; this rumour and disese
Of hegh prudence, to stinte and appese
In quiete, euery thing to sette
And aftre that, the bodies home they fette
Of the knightes, like as ye haue herde
Afore yslain, with the bloodie swerde
Of Tideus, ful sharpe whette and grounde
And in the feelde, so as they hem founde
Onely of loue, and of affeccion
Solempnely they brought hem to the town
And like the manere, of the rites olde
They were first brente, in to asshes colde
And eche one yburied, like to his degre
Loo here the halendes, of aduersite
Sorowe vpon sorowe and destruccion
Firste of the king, and al the region
For lacke onely, like as I you tolde
That behestes, truely were not holde
The firste grounde, and rote of this ruine
As the storie, clerely shal determine
And my tale, heraftre shal you lere
If that you list, the remnaunt for to here

Finitur pars Secunda, Sequitur pars Tercia.

Cruell Mars, full of Melencolie
And of thy hynde, hote combuste and drie
As the sparheles, shewen from so ferre
By the streames, of the redde sterre
In thy Spere, as it aboute goth
What was cause, that thou were so wroth
With hem of Thebes, throughe whos feruent ire
The Cite brent, and was set on fire
As bookes olde, wel reherse conne
Of cruel hate, roted and begonne
And engendred, the storie maketh minde
Onely of bloode corrupte and vnkinde
By infeccion, called original
Causing a strif, dreful and mortal
Of which the mischief throughe al Grece ran
And king Adrastus, alderfirst began
Which hath him caste, a cōqueste for to make
Upon Thebes, for Polimites sake
In knighly wise, there to preue his might
Of ful entente, to recure his right
And firste of all, he sette a parlement

And hath his letters, and messagers sent
Through Grece, to many sondry kinges
Hem to enhaste, and make no lettinges
And rounde aboute, as made is mencion
He sent also, to many a region
For Princes, Dukes, Erles, and Barons
To taken vp, in Cites and in tounes
And to chesen out, the most libliest
And soche as weren preued for the best
As of manhod, and sende hem vp echon
And in her honde, receiue her pay anon
With Adrastus, to Thebes for to ride
And tho lordes that with him abide

The great purueiance of king Adrastus towarde the cite of Thebes.

In householde stille, haue her leue take
To riden home, her retourne to make
In her countrees, as they were of degre
To sustene hem, to take vp meine
And to make hem stronge with knightes and
with speres, bowes, and Arblasteres squeres
In al the haste possible, that they may
And to retourne, in her beste aray
At terme set, ful manly to be sein
To lorne Arge monstren in a plein

The kinges & princes that come to Adrastus.

And as I rede, ful worthy of degre
Thider come first, Prothonolope
The whiche was be recorde of writing
Of Archade, sonne vnto the king
And ful prudent, founde in warre and pees
There came also, the king Gilmichenes
As I find, ful famous of renoun
Thider come eke, the king Ypomedon
And passing all, of knighthod and of name
And excelling, by worthinesse of fame
The noble king, called Campaneus
Came eke to Arge, the storie telleth thus
Proued ful wele, and had riden ferre
And thider come, the king Melleager
King Genor eke, that helde his rial se
Mine auctour saith, in the lond of Grece
King Loeris, and king Pirrus
And eke the king, called Tortolonus
And renouned, in many a region
There come the king, called Palenon
Ofte assaied, and founde a manly knight
That with him brought, in stele armed bright
Ful many worthy, out of his countre
And Tideus most knightly for to se
That noble man, that worthy werreour
As he that was, of worthinesse the flour
Maistre and Mirrour, by proues of his hõde
Hath sent also, into the mighty londe
Of Calcedoine, of whiche he was heire
That is hindom, bothe riche and feire
Charging his conseil, and officers allo
In all the haste, that it may be do
To lesen out, the beste werreours
Of famous knightes, and proued soudeours
Through al the lond, sleid on hem this charge
Without abode, for to come to Arge
And they obeye, ful lowely his bidding
Enhasting hem, and made no letting
But spedde hem faste, vpon her iournee
And from Thebes, the mighty strong citee
Came doun knightes, w many an other man
Maugre the king, to helpe what they can
Considred first, his falshod and treson
Ymeued onely, of trouth and of reson
Polimites, as they were sworn of yore
To his Croune, iustely him restore
And whan they wer, at large out of the toun
Unto Arge, they be descended doun
And like her oth, and her assurance
As they were bounde, onely of ligeance
To him they come, in ful lowly wise
Lowly to doen, what him list deuise
And whan he had, her trouth ful conceiued
He hath to grace, goodly hem receiued
Assigning hem, her place amid the oste
Assembled ther, from many a diuerse coste
That finally, in this companye
Ygadred was, the floure of Cheualrie
Ychosen out, of al Grekes londe
The most knightly, and manful of her honde
That as I trowe, sithe the worde began
Ther was not seen, so many a maly man
So wele horsed, with spere and with shelde
Togider sembled, sothely in a felde
There men might se many straunge gises
Of arming new, and vncouth deuises
Euery man, after his fantasie
That yif I shoulde, in ordre specifie
Euery peace, longing to armure
And therupon do my bely cure
It were in soth, almost a daies werke
And the termes, also been so derke
To reherse hem cleerly, and to rime
I passe ouer, for lacke of time
And tel I wil, forth of her lodging
How Adrastus, the noble worthy king
Hath euery lord, like to his degre
Receiued wele, within the cite
And there they had, like to her plesance
Of what nedeth, fulsome habondance
For men and hors, plente of vitaile
Comaunding, that nothing ne faile
That all these noble worthy werriours
Both high and lowe, and poore soudeours

Iserued

Iserued were, of what they haue neede
For Adrastus, prudently toke hede

What it auaileth a king, to pate his people trewly her sonde.

Ful liche a king, touching her terme day
That they tofore, were serued to her pay
He was so free, he liste nothing restreigne
And no man hadde cause, to compleigne
For hungre, thrust, ne for indigence
But al thing redy was, vnto her presence
And in a prince, it is full great reprief
To suffre his people, liue at mischief
It is ful heuy, and greuous in her thought
Yif he habounde, and they haue right nought
He may not bothe, possede body and herte
He to be riche, and seen his people smerte
He may the body, of power wel constreine
But her harte, hath a ful long reine
Waugre his might, to louen at her large
Ther may no king, on hertes sette a charge
Ne hem coarten, from her liberte
Wen sain ful often, how that thought is fre
For which eche prince, lorde and gouernour
And specially, eche conquerour
Let him beware, for al his hegh noblesse
That bounte, fredom, plente, and largesse
By one accorde, that they his bridel lede
Lest of his people, whan he hath most nede
He by defrauded, whan he his but alone
Than is to late, for to make his mone
But in his Courte, let him first deuise
To exile Scarcelyed, and Couetise
Than is likely, with fredome yif he ginne
Loue of his people, euermore to wynne
To reigne longe, in honour and contune
Ay to encrease, by fauour of fortune
And his enemies, manly to oppresse
For loue is more, than great richesse

How loue auaileth more to a king, than golde or richesse.

Golde faileth ofte, but loue wil abide
For life or death, by a lordes side
And the Tresour shortely, of a king
Stondeth in loue, aboue al thing
Farewel lordship, both morowe and eue
Specially, whan loue taketh his leue
And who so liste it, Mirrour for to make
Of knightly fredom, let him ensample take
Of Adrastus, the manly king famous
So liberal, and so bountuous
Vnto his people, at all times founde (founde
Whiche made him stronge, his fomen to con-
And loue onely, his enemies to werraye
Al Grece made, his bidding to obeie
Of one accorde, to knightly by his side
All at ones to Thebes for to ride
For tauenge, sithe they were so strong
The great iniure, and importable wrong
Vnto his sonne, and to his nert allye
As ye tofore, haue herde me specifie
But whiles Grekes, reste a time in pees
I wil resorte, vnto Ethiocles
Whiche in Thebes, warely hath espied
By his frendes, as he was certified
Of the Grekes, holy the ordenances
Her purpos eke, and her purueiance
And therof had, in herte a maner drede
And first he toke, his conseil and his rede

How Ethiocles made him strong, ayenst the coming of the Grekes.

Of the lordes and Barons of the toun
And of the wisest, of his region
How he might maken resistence
Manly to stonden, at defence
To be so strong, that ther were no doubte
And in the cuntrees, adiacent aboute
And eke also, in forein regions
He hath withholde, all the champions
And therupon, he sent out his espies
And his frendes, and his nert allies
And al the worthy, dwelling enutron
Young freshe and lusty, he gadred to the toun
Mashewed his walles, and his toures
And stuffed hem, with manly soudeoures
Rounde about, he set many gonnes
Greate and smal, and some large as tonnes
In his hasty, passing feruent heate
He spent his tresour, and yaue yiftes greate
Vnto knightes, and worthy men of name
And euermore, to encrease his fame
He yaue to lordes Juels manyfolde
Clothes of Veluet, Damashe and of golde
To get him hertes, sothely as I rede
To helpe him now, in his great nede
And prudently, purueied him tofore
Of flesshe, of fisshe, of wine and of corne
Set his Captains, erly and late
With ful great stuffe, stonding at euery gate
And made also, be werkemen that were trew
Barbicans and Bulwerkes stronge and new
Barreres cheines, and diches wonder depe
Making his auow, the cite for to kepe
While he liueth despite of all his fone
And by his goddes, of Metal and of stone
Full ofte he swore, bothe of herte & thought
That it shal first, ful dere ben yebought
And manye a man, with polax swerde & knif
Before this towne, shal first lese his life
And ther shal eke, many sides blede
Er that his brother, possibly possede

The

The toun in pres, like as Grekes wone
But at ende, the trouth it shal be sene
Let him be ware, and wele tofore prouide
For Adrastus, on that other side
For his partie, was not negligent
But on a day, he cide his parlement
Al his lordes, sitting enuiron
To driue shortely, a plein conclusion
And vp tapoint, the fyne of her entent
But some thought, it ful expedient
Er they procede, to werke by thauise
Of one that was, ful prudent and wise
And circumspecte, in his werkes all
A worthy Bisshop, in to age fall
And called was, soothly by his name
Amphiorar, of whom the great fame

How the Bysshop Amphiorar was sent fore to come vnto the Grekes.

Through al the lãdes, both East and Southe
Among the Grekes, passingly was couth
A man in sooth, of olde antiquite
And most accept, of auctorite
First by reson, of his high estate
And eke for he was so fortunate
And in his werkes, was also secree
With the goddes, knowing her priuetee
By graunt of whom, as bookes specifie
He hadde a spirit, of trewe prophecie
And coude afore, ful openly diuine
Thinges begon, how they should fine
And eke by crafte, of calculacion
Yeue a doom, of euery question
And had in Magike, great experience
And fine coude, by heuenly influence
And by meuing, of the high sterres
A final doom, of cruelte and of werres

The prophecie of Amphiorar the Bisshop.

And wiste wel, as his goddes tolde
That yif Grekes, forth her iourney holde
It tourne shal platly, this is no fage
To great mischef, and great damage
Of hem echone, and in especial
The moste blood, right of the blood rial
Through al Grece, it may not be withdrawe
In this viage, shortely shal be dawe
And of him, why the Grekes wente
Who that euer, wepte him or bemente
This is the fine, and may not be socoured
Of the earthe, he shoulde be deuoured
Quicke as he was, he knewe it incertain
And for he saw, ther nas none other gain
To saue his life, nor no bet defence
Than bitterly, to withdraw his presence
Praying his wife, for him to prouide
Yif he were sought, that she wolde him hide
And womanly, for to kepe him clos
And of trouthe, conceiling his purpos
For al his truste, touching his greuaunce
Was ful set, in her purueiance
I hope to god, that he there not drede
Of ne deceipte, in her womanhede
She was so trewe, as women ben echone
And also clos, and muet as a stone
That she ne wolde, as the mille stood
Discuren him, for no worldes good
But finally, the Grekes of entent
In all his drede, haue for this Bisshop sent

How the wife of Amphiorar of conscience to saue her oth discured her husbonde.

And soughten so longe, er they might him
For cause his wife was to him so kinde (finde
That so surely, hath loched vp his corps
But for she had, a maner remors
In her self, greuing her conscience
Dreding to falle, in great offence
Lest her soule, were in peril lorne
Whan she by oth, compelled was and sworne
They requering, yif she coude tell
Were her lord, the Bisshop shoulde dwel
Whiche to discure, her hert was ful loth
Til time she gan, remembre on her oth
And coude a trouthe, of custome nat denie
And had also, great conscience to lie
Wonder heuy, with a sorful face
Maugre her luste, taughte hem to the place
Where as he was, shitte vp in a toure
Al alone, hauing no soccoure
They fell on him, er that he was ware
And set him vp, in a ful riche chare
A foole he was, to ieoparde his life
For to discure, his conseil to his wife
And yet she was, ful sory for his sake
And specially, whan she saw him take
But I hope, that her heuinesse
Can tallwage ful soone by processe
In short tyme, whan that he was gon
Ther is no tempest, may lest euer in one
But this Bisshop, by verray force and might
Unto Grekes, conueied was ful right
This hore grey, in his Chare sittyng
And they ful glad, weren of his coming
Hauing a trist, and ful opinion
Through the cause, and occasion
Of his wisdom, and his sapience
And be vertue, of his hegh prescience
They should eschue, al aduersite
Possible to fal, as in her iournee
And as the storie, fully hath deuised
Ful circumspecte, and right wele auised
He hath pronounced, in the parlement
Tofore the lordes, and the President

His

His clere conceipte, in berray sikernesse
Not entriked, with no doublenesse
Her disemale daies, and her fatal houres
Her auentures, and her sharpe stoures
The froward sorte, and vnhappy stoundes
The compleint, of her dedly woundes
The woful wrath, and the contrariousse
Of fel Mars, and his cruelte
And how be meane, of his grey mood
Ther shal by shed, al the worthy blood
Of the Grekes, it may not been eschued
Yif her purpos, be execute and sued
Ther is no more, this shal be the fine
The hegh noblesse, shal drawe to decline
Of Grekes blood, in mischief, sorowe & woo
And with al this, I my selfe also
As my fate hath, before disposed
Depe in the grounde, I shal be enclosed
And locked vp, in the derke vale
Of cruel death, lo this was the tale
That the Bysshop, to Adrastus tolde
Hym conseilling, his purpos to with holde
In eschuing, of more mischief and sorowe
For al his goddes, he toke to borowe
Yif the Thebans, and the Grekes meete
The fyne therof, shal be so vnsweete
That al Grece, after shal it rewe
warning hem, yif they the mischief knewe
That shal folowe, whiche no man may lette
They wolde abstene, a siege for to sette
Vnto Thebes, and her purpos leue (greue
With whose woordes, the lordes gan hem
And therein hadde, but full small delite
And euerich, of hartely hegh despite
They abreide, and seide he was vntrewe
And a contreuer, of prophecies newe
And ek also, for al his long berde
An olde dotarde, a Coward and a ferde
And of rancure, gonne to defie
Bothe his calcling, and his Astronomie
And shortely saide, thei toke therof none hede
Ne wil no thing, gouerne hem be his rede
This was the clamour, & noise in euery coste
Of hegh and lowe, throughout al the hoste
And specially, of the poore Soudeours
And of lordes, reigning in her flours
And of the estates, effectuelly I meane
whiche of age, were but tendre and grene
That haue not hadde, of Marces influence
Of the werre, great experience
Here yf ye liste, ye may consider and se
Of couetting, great aduersite
Howe that youth, no peril cast afore
Til he in mischief, sodenly be lore
There as age, prouideth euery thing
Er he beginne, to casten the ending

How Age & youthe ben of diuerse opinions.

Youth is gouerned, by a large reine
To sterte forth, and can him not refreine
But of hed, sette on al at ones
As he that hurteleth, ayenst harde stones
Broseth him self, and vnwarly perbraketh
But Age experte, nothing vndertaketh
But he tofore, by good discrecion
Make a due examinacion
How it wil tourne, either to bad or good
But youthe as faste, as stired is the blood
Taketh empryses, of hasty wilfulnesse
Joie at ginning, the ende is wretchednesse
The olde prudent, in al his gouernaunce
Ful longe afore, maketh purueiance
But youthe alas, by counseil wil not werke
For whiche ful ofte, he stombleth in the derke
Thus selde is sen, the trouthe to termine
That age and youth, drawe by O line
And where that folie, hath domination
Wisedome is putte, in subiection

How that wisdome without supportacion, anaileth litel or nought.

Like as this Bisshop, w̄ al his hegh prudence
For cause he might, haue none audience
Al his wisedome, and his prophecie
Of the Grekes was holden but folie
For though Plato, and wise Socrates
Moral Seneke, and Diogenes
Albumaser, and prudent Theolonee
And Tullius, that hade souereinte
whilom in Rome, as of eloquence
Though al these, shortely in sentence
were alyue, most conning and experte
And no man liste, her counseil to aduerte
Nor of her sawes, for to taken hede
what might auail, and it come to nede
For wher as prudence, can finde no socour
And prouidence hath no fauour
Farewel wisedome, and farewel discrecion
For lacke onely, of supportacion
For vnsupported, with his lockes hore
Amphiorax, sighen gan ful sore
With hed enclined, & many an heuy thought
whan that he saw, his cōseil stood for nought
For vtterly, the Grekes as I tolde
Haue fully cast her iourney for to holde
Made hem redy, and gonne for to hoste
Towarde Thebes, the citee for to werreie
And in Grece, wil no lenger tarie
And forth with hem, Amphiorax they carie
Set in his chare with a doolful herte
whan he wiste, he might not asterte
Of his fate the disposicion

And hosteyng, in to the region
Of Ligurge, Grekes gan approche
I londry londe, with many a craggy roche
But al the waye, sothely that they gon
For hors ne man, water was ther non
So drie were, the valleis and the pleines
For al that yere, they had had no reynes
But ful great drought, as made is mencion
And al the lond, serching enuiron

The great mischief that the Grekes had for defaute of water.

They nothre founde welle ne Riuer
Hem to refresche, nor water that was cleer
That they alas, no refute ne coune
So importable, was the shene sonne
So hote on hem, in soules wher they ley
That for mischief, men and hors they dey
Gaping ful drie, vpwarde in to the South
And some putten, her swerdes in her mouth
And spere hedes, in stozie as it is tolde
Tallwage her thrist, with the iren colde
And of his life, ful many one despeired
In this mischief, is home agein repeired
Til on a day, worthy Tideus
And with him eke, the king Campaneus
Of purpos rode, throughout the Contree
If they migh any water see
From coost to coost, both ferre and nere
Till of fortune, they entred an herbere
With trees shadowed, fro the sonne shene
Ful of floures, and of herbes grene
Wondre holsome, of sight and aire
There in a lady, that passingly was faire
Sitting as tho, vndre a Laure tre
And in her armes, a litel childe had she
Ful gracious of looke, and of visage
And was also, wonder tendre of age
Sonne of the king, borne to succede
Called Ligurgus, in stozie as we rede
Whos hertes ioye, and worldely eke disporte
Al his myrthe eke, plesance and comforte
Was in this Childe, of excellent faireneste
And this lady, Mirrour of semelineste
Al sodenly, as she caste vp her sight
Upon his stede, saw an armed knight
Gretly abalshed, gan her anon remue
But Tideus, gan after faste to sue

How Tideus compleined to the lady in the herber for water.

And saide sustre, beth nothing dismaied
In your self, displeased nor affraied
For we are come, onely to this place
You to beseche, of mercy and of grace
Us to soccoure, in our great nede
Declaring you, how it stand in dede
Here faste by, almost at honde
The worthiest, of al Grekes londe
Kinges, Princes, be lodged in the felde
And many other, with polax and with shelde
Whiche in mischief, peril and greate drede
For want of water, are lykely to be dede
For there was none, of high ne low degree
In al oure host, now passed daies thre
That dranke allas, I excepte none estate
Our fate, is so infortunate
Praiyng you, of womanly pite
Benignely, and gracously to se
How of Grece, al the Cheualrie
Of her liues, stondes in ieopardie
That ye woulde, of womanhode tell
If ye knowe any, riuer, spring or well
Specially now, in our care
Of gentillesse, vnto vs declare
Lo here is al, yf ye luste to here
That I wil seine, min owne sustre dere
And whan this lady, inly vertuous
The complaint herde, of worthy Tideus
Of verray pite, chaungeth chiere and hewe
And in her herte, vpon his woo gan rewe
And ful goodly, seyng his distresse
Saide vnto him, in al his heuinesse

How the lady curtesly taught Tideus to the wel

Certes (q she, yf I wer at large
Thouchig this child, which I haue in charge
I shoulde in haste, of al that doth you greue
To my power, helpe you and releue
Onely of routhe, and of compassion
And leue al other occupacion
Conuei you, and be your trew gide
To a riuer, but litel here beside
But I dare not, so moch me assure
This litel Childe, to putte in aduenture
I am so fearful, from it to departe
But for your sake, yet I shal do parte
My lyfe, my death, of trewe affection
To prouide for your saluacion
Toke the Childe, and leide it in her lappe
And richely, in clothes gan it wrappe
And couched it, among the herbes sote
And leide aboute, many an holsom rote
And floures eke, bothe blewe and rede
And suppriled, with a manere of drede
With Tideus forth anon she went
As she in trouth, that no treson mente
And on her wele, wolde neuer dwell
Til she him brought, to a right faire wel
And to a riuer, of water ful habounde
But who was glad, and who was tho iocūde
But Tideus seyng the riuer
Whiche in al haste, sent his messager
To Adrastus, and bad him not abide

But

But doun descende, to the Riuer side
With al his hoste, licour for to haue
At this Riuer, her liues for to saue
And they enhasted hem, making non abode
All at ones, to the Riuer, rode
For to drinke, they had so great luste
Of appetite, for to staunche her thruste
And some dranke, and founde it did hem good
And some were, so feruent and so wood
Upon the water, that in sikernesse
Through vndiscrete, and hasty gredinesse
Out of mesure, the water so they drinke
That they felle ded, euen vpon the brinke
And some naked, in to the Riuer ronne
Onely for hete, of the Somer Sonne
To bathen hem, the water was so colde
And some also, as I haue you tolde
I meane tho, that prudent were and wise
The water dranke, in mesurable wise
That of the thrust, they haue before endured
They were refreshed, fully and recured
And Grekes than, of high and lowe degre
For her profite, and her commodite
Compasse the riuer, Crisalin of sight
Of one accorde, they her tentes pight
To reste hem ther, in reles of here peine
Onely the space, of a day or tweine
And whiles Grekes, vpon the riuer lay
This Tideus, vpon the same day
Ful knightly, hath doon his diligence
This yong lady, with great reuerence
To Adrastus, goodly to presente
At whose coming, the king him selfe went
Again her, she falling doun on knees
All the estates, tho present and degrees
Of Grekes londe, absent was not one
And in his Armes, toke her vp anon
Thanking her, of her besinesse
Of her labour, and her kindenesse
Behoting her, like as he was holde
If any thing, pleinly that she wolde
That he may don, she shulde it redy finde
And also Grekes al, the storie maketh minde
Of the estates, beyng tho present
Thanked her, with al her holle entent
For the freshing, doon to many a Greke
And for her parte, they behight her eke
With her bodies, and goodes bothe two
What her liste, comande hem for to do
To be redy platly, and not faille
And here my Auctour, maketh reherssaille
That this lady, so faire vpon to se
Of whom the name, was Isiphile
To Adrastus tolde, as ye may rede
Lineally, the storie of her kinrede
Somtime how she, a kinges doughtre was
Rehersing to him, al the holl caas
First howe that she, out of her countre went
Shortely for she, wolde nat assente
To execute, a conspiracion
Made by the women, of that Region
A thing contraire, ageins al right
That eche of hem, vpon a certein night
By one accorde, shal warly take kepe
Fader, Brother, and husbandes in her slepe
With kniues sharpe, and rasours kene
Kitte her throtes, in that mortal tene
Unto to this fine, as Bochas tell can
In al that lande, be not founde a man
But slain echone, to this conclusion
That women might, haue domination
In that kingdom, and regne at liberte
And on no parties, interrupted be
But for this lady, passing debonair
To this matere, was froward and contraire
Kepte her fader, that he was not slawe
But from the death, preserued & withdrawe
For whiche alas, she fled the Cuntree
And of a Pirat, taken in the See
To king Ligurgus, brought in al her drede
And for her trouthe, and her womanhed
To her he tooke, his yonge childe to kepe
Whiche in the herber, she lefte alone to slepe
Whan Tideus, she brought to the well
And be Jason, some bokes tell
That this lady, had sonnes two
Whan that he, and Hercules also
Towarde Colchos, be her countre cam
For to acomplisshe, the conqueste of the Ram
But who that liste, by and by to se
The storie hool of Isophilee
Her fadres name, of whiche also I write
Thought some sein, he named was Thorite
And some bookes, Hermos eke him call
But to know, the auentures all
Of this lady, Isophile the faire
So faithfull aye, and inly debonaire
Loke on the booke, that Jhon Bochas made
Whilom of women, with Rhetoriques glade
And directe, be ful souereigne stile
To faire Jane, the Quene of Cesile
Rede there the Rubrike, of Isophile
Of her trouth, and of her bounte
Ful craftely, compiled for her sake
And whan that she, her leue hath take
Of Adrastus, homward in her weie
Tideus gan her to conueye
To the Gardin, till she is repeired
But now alas, my matere is despeired
Of al ioye, and of al wilfulnesse

And destitute, of al mirthe and gladnesse
For now of wo, beginne the sharpe shoures
For this lady, hath founde among the floures

How the Child was slain of a foule serpēt in ẏ herber.

Her litel Childe, turned vp the face
Slain of a Serpent, in the selfe place
Her tail burled, with scales siluer shene
The venim was, so persing and so kene
So mortal eke, the perilous violence
Caused alas, through her long absence
She was to slowe, homward for to hie
But now can she, but wepe, waile, and crie
Now can she nought, but sigh and complene
And wofully wringe, her hondes tweine
Dedly of looke, pale of face and chere
And gan to rende. her gilte tresses clere
And ofte sithe, gan to saye alas
I woful wretche, vnhappy in this cas
What shal I do, or whider shal I tourne
For this the fine, if I here soiourne
I wot right wel, I may it not escape
The pitous fate, that is for me shape
Socour is ther none, ne none other rede
Liche to my deserte, but that I mot be dede
For through my slouth, and my negligence
I haue alas, don to great offence
That my gilte, I may it not excuse
Shal to the king, of treson me accuse
Through my defence, and slouthe bothe two
His sonne is ded, and his heire also
Whiche he loued, more than al his good
For tresour none, so nigh his herte stood
Nor was so depe, graue in his corage
That he his likly, to fallen in a rage
Whan it is so, mine odious offence
Reported be, vnto his audience
So importable shal be his heuinesse
And well wot I, in verray sothfastenesse
That whan the quene, hath this thing aspied
To mine excuse, it may not be denied
I doubte it nat, ther geineth no pite
Without respite, she wil auenged be
On me alas, as I haue deserued
That from the death, I may not be preserued
Nother by bille, nor by supplicacion
For the rage, of my transgression
Requereth death, and none other mede
And thus alas, she quaking in her drede
None other helpe, ne remedie can
But dreint in sorowe, to the Grekes ran
Of hertely woo, face and chere distreined
And her chekes, with weping albereined
In hie affray distraught and furious
Tofore al thoste, she came to Tideus
Fil on knees, and gan her compleint make
And tolde pleinly, that for the Grekes sake
She must be ded, and shortely in substaunce
Rehersing him, the groūde of her greuaunce
First how by traines, of a false serpent
The Childe was slain, while she was absent
And whan that he, her mischief vnderstood
In what disioynte, and peril that she stood
Vnto her ful knightly he behight
To helpe and further al that euer he might
Her pitous woo, to stinten and appease
And for to finde vnto her disease
Hastie comforte, he wente a ful great paas
To Adrastus, and tolde him all the caas
Of this vnhappy, woful auenture
Beseching him, to doon his besy cure
As he was bounde, of equite and right
And eke aduertise, and to haue a sight
How she quitte her, to Grekes here toforn
That they were likly, to haue ben lorn
The socour voide, of her womanhede
For whiche he muste, of knighthod take hede
To remedien, this vnhappy thing
And Adrastus, like a worthy king
Taquite him selfe, the storie maketh minde
To this lady, wil not be founde vnkinde
Neither for coste, ne for no trauaile
But besy was, in al that might auaile
To her socoure, considred al thinges
And by thauise, of al the worthy kinges
Of Grekes londe, they ben accorded thus
Princes Dukes, and with hem Tideus
To holde her way, and al at ones ride
To Ligurgus, dwelling there beside
Of one entent, if they may purchace
In any wise, for to get grace
For this lady, called Isophilee
They wolde assaye, if it might be
And to his palaice, ful rially bilt of stone
The worthy Grekes, cam riding euerichone
Euery lord, ful freshely on his stede
And Ligurgus, example of manly hede
Anon as he knewe, of her coming
Tacquite him self, like a gentill king
Agein hem wente, to mete hem on the way
Ful wel besein, and in good aray
Receiuing hem, with a ful knightly chere
And to Adrastus, said as ye shal here
Cosin (ꝙ he) and gan him to embrace
Ye be welcome, to your owne place
Thanking hertely, to your hegh noblesse
That so goodly, of your gentillesse
Towardes me, ye liste you to acquite
Your selfe this day, your Cosin to visite
In this castel to take your lodging
That neuer yet, I was so glad of thing

In

In al my life, and therto here my trouthe
And euermore, ther shal be no slouth
That the chambres, and the large toures
Shal be deliuered, to your herberiours
That euery lord, as he is of degre
Unto his lodging, assigned shal be
Your officers, let hem selfe deuise
Yf the housing, largely may suffise
To you and youres, stretchen and atteine
That none estate, haue cause to compleine
And all youre host, lodged her beside,
Whiche ententifly, upon you abide
Let hem set, by my auctorite
Vitaille inough, here in my cite
And al that may hem, socoure or saue
And at o woorde, al that euer I haue
Is ful and holl, at your commandement

How Adrastus and al thestates of Grekes preiden Ligurgus for the life of Isophile.

(q Adrastus) that is not our entent
Nor no parte, cause of our coming
For we be come, al for an other thing
A certein gifte, of you to requere
Benignely, yf ye liste to here
Whiche may Grekes passingly auaile
Of our requeste, yf we do not faile
Which we dare not, openly expresse
Withouten that ye, wil of your gentillesse
Your graunte, aferme, conferme, and ratifie
Than were be bolde, it to specifie
(q Ligurgus, what thing euer it be
Not excepted, but onely thinges thre
The firste is this, it touche not my life
My yong sone pleinly nor my wife
Take al my good, and what ye liste prouide
Of my tresoure, and set theise thre aside
Al the surplus, I compte nat amyte
Than Adrastus, astonied was alite
What Ligurgus, in conclusion
Of his sonne, made excepcion
And whiles they treate, thus in ferre
There came forth one, with a woful chere
Of face and looke, pale and nothing red
And loude crieth the kinges sonne is ded
Alas the while, that whilom was so feire
After Ligurgus, borne to ben his heire
The whiche alas, hath yolden up the breth
Of a Serpent, stong unto the death
And with his wounde, new freshe and grene
In the herber lithe, that pite is to sene
And hath so lein, almost al this day
But whan Ligurgus, herde this affra
And wiste his childe, was ded and had no mo
Litel wonder, though that he was wo
For sodenly, the importable smerte
Ran anon, and hente him by the herte

The sorowe that king Ligurgus made for the death of his Childe, and the lamentacio of the Quene.

That for constreynt, of his dedly peine
Throughout he felt, corsen euery veine
The rage gan mine, on him so depe
That he coude not, but sobbe, sighe, and wepe
And with the noise, and lamentacion
The Queene distraught, is descended doun
And whā she knew, the groūd of al this sorow
It neded her, no teres for to borow
But twenty tyme, upon arow
Aswound she fel, to the erthe lowe
And stoundemel, for this mischaunce
Stille as stone, she lithe in a traunce
But whā ỳ Childe, in to courte was brought
Tofore Ligurgus, alas I wite him nought
Upon the corps, with a mortall face
He fel atones, and gan it to embrace
Sore to grispe, and agein up sterte
Than whan Adrastus this thing can aduerte
Of kingly routhe, and compassion
From his eyen, the teres fel adoun
The Kinges, Dukes, that about stood
Onely of pite, that is in gentil blood
No power had, the teres to restreine
That on her chekes, doun began to reine
But al a day, wolde not suffice
All her sorowes, in ordre to deuise
First of the king, and the queene also
To tellen al, I should neuer haue do
Not in the space, almost of an houre
But whan the stormes, and the teary shoure
Of her weping, was somwhat ouergon
The litel Corps, was grauen under ston
And Adrastus, in the same tide
Ligurgus toke, a litell out a side
And ful wisely, with his prudent speche
The Quene present, gan him for to teche
That so to sorowe, auaille may right nought
To murdre him self, with his owne thought
Ayeinst death, may be no recure
Though in wo, perpetuelly endure
Al helpeth not, whan the soule is go
And our life here, thus taketh heed therto
Is but an exile, and a pilgrimage
Ful of turment and of bitter rage
Liche See renning to and fro
Suing an Ebbe, whan the flood is do
Litel space, abiding at full
Of whose soiourne, the pope yeueth no bul
For king is none, Duke ne Emperour
That may him shroude, ayenst his fatal shour

Of cruel death, whan him list manace
To marke a man with his mortal mace
Than geineth, not to his saluacion
Neither franchise, ne protection
And litel or nought, may helpen in this caas
Saufcondit, either supersedeas
For in this world, who so loketh aright
Is none so great, of power nor of might
None so riche, shortely nor so bolde
That he must dye, either yonge or olde
And who in youthe passeth this passage
He escaped is, all the woode rage
Al sorow, al trouble, of this present life
Replenished, with contek werre and strife
Whiche selde or neuer, stondeth in surete
Wherfore beste is, as it semeth me
No man grutche, but of high prudence
The sonde or god, he take in pacience
And ye that ben, so wise and manly to
Your self to drowne, in turment and in wo
For losse of thing, and ye lisse to se
That in no wise, may recured be
Is great folie, and vndiscrecion
And thus Idrastus, hath conueied doun
The substance hool, of that he wold seye
Til that he sonde, a time for to preye
Conuenient for Isophilee
Beseching him, for to haue pite
Of that she hath, offended his sheghnesse
Not wilfully, but of rechelesnesse
First that he wolde, his domes so diuide
Mercy preferre, and set right aside
At requeste, and preier of hem all
Of this vnhappe, and mischief that is fall
By hasty rigour, not to do vengeance
But thinke aforne in his purueance
Who to wretches, doth mercy in her drede
Shal mercy finde, whan he hath moste nede
And sithe he hath, power might and space
Let him take this lady, into his grace
For lacke of routhe, that she nat thus die
But tho the Quene, gan again replie

How the Quene wil algate haue the Serpent ded.

And platly saide, as in this matere
Auaileth neither, requeste nor prayere
Pite mercy nor remission
But yf it be, by this condicion
That the Serpent, cause of al sorow
Through his labour, lay his hed to borowe
This is final, and vtter recompence
To finde grace, for her great offence
Or elles shortely, shede blood for blood
And wham Grekes, her answere vnderstod
Of one accorde, in her beste wise
Take on hem, this auenturous empryse
For loue onely, of Isophile
And gon to ride enuiron the contre
By hilles, valeis, roches and caues
In diches derke, and in olde graues
By euery coste, serching vp and doun
Til at laste, ful famous of renoun
The worthy knight, Parthonolope
Was the firste, that happed for to se
This hidous Serpent, by a Riuer side
Great and horrible, sterne and ful of pride
Under a Roche, by a banke lowe
And in al hast, he bent a sturdie bowe
And therin set an Arowe filed kene
And through the body, spotted blewe & grene

How Parthonolope slew the Serpent.

Full myghtely, he made it for to glide
And hent out a swerde, hanging be his side
Smote of his hed, and anon it hent
And therwith al, gan the Quene present
Wherthrough percel, she gan tall wage
And thus of prowesse, and of high corage
This manly man, this Parthonolope
Hath reconsiled, faire Isiphile
Unto grace, fully of the Quene
Her Ire voided, and her olde tene
And by Idrastus, mediacion
King Ligurgus, graunted a pardon
To this lady, from al daunger fre
She was restored, to her liberte
In his palaice, al her life to dwelle
Though Iyon Bochas, the contraire telle
For this auctour, affermeth out of drede
That whan the childe, was be the serpēt dede
She durste not, for her great offence
Neuer after, come in presence
Of Ligurgus, but of entencion
Fled anon, out of that region
In herte she tooke, the childes death so sore
What telle of her, finde I can no more
Than ye haue herde, aforne me specifie
And the kingdome, but yf bookes lie

Nota, de Ligurgo Rege Tracee.

Of Ligurgus, called was Trace
And as I rede, in an other place
He was the same, mighty Champion
To Athenes, that came with Palamon
Ayenst his Brother, that called was Arcite
Pied in his chare, with .iiii. Bolles white
Upon his hed, a wrethe of golde ful fine
And I finde eke, how Bachus god of wine

Bacas, deus Vini.

With this king, was whilom at debate
Onely for he, pompous and elate

Destruction

Destruction did to his vines
And for he first, set alay on wines
Meint with water, whan they were to strōg
And this Bachus, for the great wrong
Brake his limmes, and dreint him in the see
Of Ligurgus, ye gete no more of me
But the trouthe, yf ye list verifie
Rede of Goddes, the Genealogie

Nota, de duodecim arboribus in libro Bochacij de genealogia Deorum.

Lyneally her hinrede by degrees
Vbranched out, vpon .xii. trees
Made by Bochas, Decertaldo called
Among poetes, in Ytaile stalled
Next Fraunceis Petrake, suing in certein
Now vnto Grekes, I wil retourne agein
To telle forth shortely, yf I con
Of her iourney, that they haue begon
Here Adrastus, hath his leue take
Of Ligurgus, with his browes blake
And departing, with seint Jhon to borowe
Made his wardes, on the next morowe
So welbesein, so mighty and so stronge
Wonder erly, whan the larke songe
With a trompet, warned euery man
To be redy, in al the haste they can
For to remue, and no letting make
And so they haue, the right weye take
Towarde Thebes, the Grekes euerichon
That soche a nombre gadred in to one
Of worthy knightes, neuer afore was sein
Whan they in feere, were moustred in a plein
And they ne stinte, by none occasion
Til they be comen, euene afore the town
And pight her tentes, prowdely as I rede
Under the walles, in a grene Mede
And whan the Thebans, were besette about
The manly knightes, wold haue priked oute
And haue scarmisshed, in her hasty pride
With her fomen, on that other side
But by bidding, of Ethiocles
Al thilke night, they kepte hem self in pees
Because onely, that it was so late
With great waite, set at euery gate
Men of armes, al the night walking
On the walles, by bidding of the king
Lest there were traine, or treson
And on the toures, and in the chief dongeon
He set vp men, to make mortal sownes
With brasen hornes, and loude Clarounes
Of ful entent, the watches for to kepe
In his warde, that no man ne slepe
And Grekes proudely, al the long night
Kindeled fires, and made ful great light
Set vp lodging, vpon euery side
Like as they shoulde, euer there abide
Compas the toun, ther was no boide space
But al be set, her fomen to manace
And whiles they, tofore the cite leye
On euery coste, they sent out to forreie

The forreie that the Grekes made in the Countrey aboute Thebes.

Brent townes, Thorpes and vilages
With great rauing, making her pilages
Spoile & robbe, and brought home vitaille
And all manere, fortes of bestaille
Shepe and Nete, in her cruel rage
With houndes slain, all that was sauage
Herte and Hinde, bothe Bucke and Do
The blackes Bere, and the wilde Ro
The fatte swine, and the tusky Bore
Caryyng all home, for the Grekes store
Whete and wine, for her auauntage
Hay and Otes, fodder and forage
With the kalendes, as hem thought due
The Grekes gan the Thebans salue
Ministring hem, occasions felle
The Siege set, shortely for to telle
Of full entent, in her hateful pride
For life or death, therupon tabide
Who so euer, theratte be agreued
Til they fully, her purpos haue acheued
Ther may therof, be made no reles
And of al this, ful ware Ethiocles
Gan in partie greatly to merueille
Whan he sawe, the great apparaille
Of the Grekes, the Cite round about
And in him selfe, had a manere doubte
Nowe at pointe, what was best to do
For thilke time, it stode with him so
That to some, abiding in the toun
He hade in herte, a great suspecion
Lest towarde him, that they were vnstable
And to his Brother, in partie fauorable

The variaunce in Thebes among hem selfe.

For in the cite, ther was variance
That vnto him, was a great mischance
For in his nede, shortly he ne wiste
Vpon whom, that he might triste
For they were nat all, of one entente
Wherfore he hath, for his conseil sente
Al his lordes, and the olde Queene
Soche as he dempte, that were pure & clene
Hool of one herte, and not variable
Of olde experte and alwey founde stable
Requering hem, because they were wise
All openly to tellen her auise
Wher it were better, pleinly in her sight

with his brother, to treaten or to fight
And some gaue, a ful blunte sentence
Whiche had of werre, none experience
Saide it was beste, and not ben aferde
To trie his right, manly with the swerde
And some also, that were more prudent
Spake vnto him, be good auisement
And lisse not spare, but her conceite tolde
How it was beste, his couenaunt to holde
And to performe, his heste made toforn
To his Brother, liche as he was sworn
So ỳ his worde, the wors make him to spede
Be not founde variant, from the dede
For none hatrede, rancour ne pride
And tho the Queene, toke him out a side

The wordes of the worthy Queene Iocasta vnto Ethiocles.

Tolde him pleinly, it was ful vnsitting
Soche doublenesse, to finden in a king
And saide him eke, although he were strong
Vnto his Brother, he did wrong
As al the town, will recorde in dede
And bere witnesse, if it come to nede
Wherfore let vs shape, an other mene
In this mattere, while that it is grene
Er this querele, thus gon of volunte
Turne in the fine, to more aduersite
For yf it be, darreyned by battaile
Who trusteth moste, may ful lightly faile
And it is folye, be shorte auisement
To put a strif in Martes iudgement
For hard it is, whan a iudge is wood
To treate aforne him, without losse of blood
And yf we put, our mater vool in Marte
Which with his swerd, his lawes doth coarte
Than may it happe, wher ye be glad or wroth
Thou and thy Brother, shul repente both
And many an other, that is here present
Of your trespas, that ben verray innocent
And many a thousand, percas shal cõpleine
For the debate, onely of you tweyne
And for youre strife, shal finde ful vnswote
And for thou art ginner, grounde and rote
Of this iniurie, and this great vnright
To the goddes, that herof han a sight
Thou shal accomptes, and a rekning make
For all tho, that perisshen for thy sake
And now the cause, driuen is so ferre
Sodeinly pees, either hasty werre
Mot folowe anon, for the fatal chaunce
Of life and death, dependeth in balaunce
And thou ne maist, by no crafte restreine
That vpon one, platly of you tweine
The sorte mot fall, like as it doth tourne
Who so euer ther at, either laughe or mourne
And thou art driuen, so narowe to the strake
That thou maist not, mo delaies make
But fight or treate, this is the vtter fine
By none engin, thou canst it not decline
In hasty caas, as folke sain that ben wise
Redresse requereth, by full short auise
For to trete longe, now auailleth nought
For to the point, sothly thou art brought
Either to kepe, thy possession
Or in al haste, devoide out of this toun
Wher thou therwith, be wroth or wel appaid
Now note wel, al that I haue saide
And by my Counseil, wisely condescende
Wronge wrought of olde, newly to amende
The tyme is come, it may be none other
Wherfore in haste, treate with thy brother
And agein him, make no resistence
But to thy lordes, fully yeue credence
By whos Counseill, sithe they be so sage
Let Polimite, reioise his yeritage
And that shall tourne, most to thine availl
Loo here is hool, the fine of our Counsaill

The treatie that Ethiocles sent vnto his Brother.

And shortly tho, for ire wroth
Though he herto, froward was and lothe
According is, hearing al the pres
Al he algate, shall treate for a pees
It muste be by this condicion
That he wil haue the dominacion
First in chiefe to him selfe reserued
As him thoughte, he had it well deserued
And saue to him, holl the souereintee
And vnder him, in Thebes the citee
He to graunt, with a right good chere
Polymyte, the reigne for a yere
Than tauoide, and not resorte agein
For more to claine, was al but in vein
This wolde he doon, onely for her sake
And otherwise, he wil none ende make
With Grekes, what fortune euer befall
And finally, emong his lordes all
Ther nas not one, of high or lowe estate
That wolde gone, on this Amballiat
Out of the town, ne for bet ne wors
Til Iocasta, made sadle her hors
And caste her self to gon on this treate
To make an ende, if it wolde be
And this was don, the morow right be time
Upon the houre, whan it drewe to prime
And with her wente, here yonge doughtres
Antigone, and the faire Ismeine (twaine
Of her meine, ful many one aboute
At gate she was, conueied oute
And of purpos, she made firste her went

On

On horse bake, to king Adrastus tent
He and his lordes, being al in fere
And they receiue her, with a right glad chere
Shewing her, like to her degree
On euery halk, ful great humanite
Polmite rising, from his place
And hubly, his modre can embrace
Kissed her, and thanne Antigone
And eke Ismeine, excellent of beaute
And for that they, passingly were faire
Great was the pres, concours and repaire
Of the ladies, for to haue a sight
And Jocasta procedeth anon right
To Adrastus, the matere to purpose
And gan to him, openly to disclose
Thentent and wil, of Ethiocles
And by what meane, he desireth pees
To him reserue, as he gan specifie
The honour hool, and the regalie
W Sceptre and croune, from him not diuided
But hool to him, as he hath prouided
And Polimite, by this condicion
Under him to reigne in the toun
As a sogette, by suffrance of his Brother
But the Grekes, thoughten al an other

The knightly answere of worthy Tideus.

And specially, worthy Tideus
Pleinly affermyng, it shoulde nat be thus
For he wil haue no condicions
But set aside, al excepcions
Nothing reserue, as in speciall
But holle the lordship, regalie and al
Be Polimites, it fully to possede
In Thebes crouned, verely in dede
And rightful king, putte in possession
Like the couenauntes, and conuencion
y made of olde, assured and ensealed
That shal not now, of new be repeled
But stable and hol, in his strengthe stonde
And let him platly, so understonde
And first that he, deuoide him out of towne
And deliuere the Sceptre and the croune
To his Brother, and make therof no more
And shortely elles, it shall be bought ful sore
Or this matere, brought be to an ende
For Grekes be ther none, y shull hens wende
Er that oure right, that is vs denied
With life and death, darreined be and tried
We wil not erst, from this toun remewe
And yf him list, al this thing eschue
And al mischief, stinten and appese
To either part, he may do great ese
Thus I meane, for his auauntage
Deliuer vp hool, the trew heritage
To his brother, for heire to endure
And Grekes shal fully him assure
By what bonde, that him list deuise
The yere complete, in our best wise
To him deliuer, ayen possession
Without strief, or contradicion
And to this fine, iustely holde vs to
And yf it falle, that he wil not so
Let him not waite, but onely after werre
The houre is come, we wil it not deferre
Lo here is al, and thus ye may reporte
To him ayein, whan that ye resorte
From which, appointment we caste vs nat to
And yet to him, Amphiorax y cõtrarie (varie
Ful pleinly saide, in conclusion
This fine shal cause, a destruction
Of hem echone, if it forth procede
To be performed, and execute in dede
But thilke tyme, for al his eloquence
He had in soth, but litel audience
For whether so he, ment good or ille
King Adrastus, bad him to be stille
And tho Jocasta, as wisedome did her teche
Humble of her port, with ful softe speche
Gan seche meanes, in her fantasie
If she might the ire modifie
Of the Grekes, to make hem to encline
In any wise, her rancour for to fine
She did her deuour, and her besy cure
But than befel, a wonder auenture
Cause and grounde of great confusion
Grekes pertourbing, and eke the toun
And it to tell, I may not asserte
For whiche a while, my stile I mot auerte

Of a tame Tigre dwellyng in Thebes.

And shortely tel, by descripcion
Of a Tigre, dwelling in the toun
Whiche from a kingdome, beside adiacent
Out of Egipte, was to Thebes sent
Whiche beaste, by recorde of scriptures
Is most swifte, as of his nature
And of kinde, also most sauage
And moste cruell, whan he his in his rage
And as clerkes, maken mencion
He of body resembleth the Lion
And like a greihonde the mosel and the hed
And of eyen, as any fire red
Eke of his skin, writen as I finde
Like a Panter, conuersaunt in Inde
With al maner hues and colours
And is ful ofte, deceiued with Mirrours
By frande of huntes, and falle apparence
Shewed in glas, withouten existence
Whan his kindeles, are be sleightes take
And he destreined, may no rescus make
And like a lambe, was this Tigre tame

Ayenst kinde, mine Auctour wyt the same
And this beast, marueilous to see
Was sent to Ymeine, and Antigone
That vnto hem, did great comforte
And coude pleie, and make good disporte
Like a welpe, that is but yong of age
And to no wight, did no damage
No more in sothe, than doth a litel hounde
And it was worthy, many an hundred pounde
Vnto the king, for ay in his greuance
Ther was nothing, ẏ did him more plesaunce
That for no tresour, it might not be bought
For whan that he was, pensife or in thought
Yt putte him out, of his heuinesse
And thilke time, the storie doth expresse
That Jocaste, treted for a pees
This tame Tigre, in partie rekeles
Out at gates, in sight of many a man
In to the felde, wildely out ran
And casuelly, renning to and fro
In and out, as doth the tame Ro
Grekes wening, that were yong of age
That this Tygre, hadde be sauage
And cruely, besetting al the place
Rounde aboute, gan him to enchace
Til he was ded, and slain in the felde
The slaughter af whom, whā ẏ they beheldе
The proud Thebans, which on ẏ walles stod
They ran doun, furious and wood
Wening he be slain, of despite
Taking her hors, without more respite
Fully purposed, with Grekes for to fight
The Tygres death, tauenge if they might
And forth they rode, without gouernaile
And ful proudely, Grekes gon assaile
And of hatred, and ful hegh disdain
Fellen on hem, that han the Tigre slein
And cruelly quitten hem her mede
That many a Greke, in the grene mede
By the force, and the great might
Of her fomen, lay slain in this fight
The Tigres death, so sore they abought
So mortally Thebans, on hem wrought
That al the host, in the felde ligging
Was astonied, of this sodein thing
And in this wise, of rancour rebeles
Out of Thebes, rode Ethiocles
And with him eke, the worthy king Tremour
Of his honde, a noble werriour
That made Grekes, to forsake her place
And to her tentes, gan hem to enchace
And midde the felde, as they togider mette
On horsebake, with speres sharpely whette
Of berray hate, and enuious pride
Ful many one, was ded on either side
The whiche thing, whan Thideus espieth
Wood as a Lion, to horsebake he hieth
As he that was, neuer a del aferd
But ran on hem, and mette hem in the herd
And maugre hem, in his cruelte
He made hem flee home, to her cite
Hem pursuyng, of ful dedly hate
That many one, lay slain at gate
Gaping vpright, with her woundes wide
That vtterly, they durst not abide
Tofore the swerde of Tideus
He was on hem, so passing furious
So many Thebans, herof to the herte
That whā Jocasta, the slaughter can aduerte
Polimite the preie gan ful faire
To make Grekes, home again repaire
And that they wolden, stinte to assaille
For thilke time, and ceassen her battaille
At whos request pleinly and preire
And at reuerence, of his moder dere
Polimite her herte to comforte
Grekes made home, ayein resorte
And Tideus, to stinten of his chace
And they of Thebes, hasting a great pace
Ful trisse and heuy, ben entred in to the toun
And for the Tigre, in conclusion
As ye haue herde, firste began the strife
But many a Theban, that day lost his life
And recureles, hath yeuen vp the breth
Of thauenging, of the Tigres death
And al this while, duely as she oughte
The Quene Jocaste, humbly besought
Kyng Adrastus, holly of his grace
Some meane weie, wisely to purchace
To make a pees, betwene the brethren twein
And the tretee, so prudently ordeine
On either parte, that no blood be shad
And thus Adrastus, auised and right sad
For Grekes partie, answere yaue anon
That other ende shortely, gate he non
Liche as the lordes, fully ben auised
Than Tideus toforn hath deuised
And whan she saw, it may none other be
She leue toke, and home to the cite
She is repeired, hauing to her guide
Polymyte riding, be her side
And Thideus led Antigone
And of Achade, Protonolope
The worthy king, did his bely peine
To be attendant, vpon faire Ymeine
Whos herte she hath, to her seruice lured
And he ayein hath, portreied and figured
Mid of his brest, which lightly may not passe
Holly the setures, of her freshely face
Hym thought she was, so faire a creature

And

And though that he, durst hym not discure
Yet in his harte, as fersorthe as he can
He hath auowed, to be her true man
Unwist to her, plainly and vnknowe
How he was marked, with Cupides bowe
With his arowe, sodainly werreied
And to the yates, the Ladies conueied
Been entred in, for it drewe to eue
Grekes of hem, takyng tho her leue
Though some of hem, were loth to departe
Yet of wisedome, thei durst not ieoparte
Under a conduit, to enter into the toun
Lest it tourned, to her confusion
Though some bookes, the contraire sain
But myne aucthour, is plain there again
And affermeth, in this opinion
That Tideus, of high discrecion
Of wilfulnesse, nor of no folie
Ne would as tho, put in ieopardie
Neither hymself, ne none of his feres
And the Ladies, with her heauenly cheres
Angelike of looke, and countenaunce
Liche as it is put, in remembraunce
At her entryng, from Grekes into the toun
Polimite, of greate affeccion
The quene besought, ẏ thilke night not fine.
For tassaie, if she might encline
Ethiocles, of conscience and right
To kepe couenaunt, as he hath behight
Full yore agone, with surplusage
Lest the contraire, come to damage
First of hymself, and many an other mo
And thus from Thebes, the Grekes been ago
To her Tentes, and reste hem all that night
And Lucina, the Moone shone full bright
Within Thebes, on the depe dongeon
When Jocasta, made relacion
Unto the kyng, and tolde him all the gise
How that Grekes, vtterly despise
His profre made, by false conclusion
Onely excepte, the conuencion
Of olde engrossed, by greate purueiance
Whiche is enrolled, and put in remembrance
Upon whiche, thei finally will reste
Hym counsailyng, her thought for the beste
To conforme hym, to that he was bounde
Lest in the fine, falsnesse hym confounde
But all her counsaile, he set it at no price
He dempte hymself, so prudent and so wise
For he was wilfull, and he was indurate
And in his harte, of malice obstinate
And vtterly auised, in his thought
Within Thebes, his brother get right nought
And in his errour, thus I let hym dwell
And of the Grekes, forth I will you tell
Whiche all that night, kept hem self close
And on the morowe, when Titan vp arose
Thei armed hem, and gan hem redie make
And of assent, haue the felde itake
With the Thebans, that daie without doubt
For to fighten, if thei issue out
And Adrastus, in full thriftie wise
In the felde, his wardes can deuise
As he that was, of all deceiptes ware
And richely, armed in his chaire
Amphiorax, came with his meinee
Full renoumed, of antiquitee
And well experte, bicause he was olde
And while that Grekes, as I haue you tolde
Were besiest, her wardes to ordeine
Mid of the felde, befell a case sodeine
Full vnhappie, lothsome, and odible
For liche a thyng, that were inuisible
This old bishop, with horse and chare certein
Disapered, and no more was sein
Onely of fate, whiche no man can repelle
The yearth opened, and he fell doune to helle

How the Bishop Amphiorax, fell doune into helle.

With all his folke, that vpon him abode
And sodainly, the grounde that he on rode
Closed ayein, and to gidre shette
That neuer after, the Grekes with him mett
And thus the deuill, for his old outrages
Liche his desert, paied him his wages
For he full lowe, is descended doun
Into the derke, and blacke Region
Where that Pluto, is crouned and istalled
With his quene, Proserpine icalled
With whō this bishop, hath made his mãsion
Perpetuelly, as for his guerdon
Lo here the meede, of Idolatrie
Of Rites olde, and false Maumetrie
Lo what auaillen, incantacions
Of exorcismes, and coniurisons
What stoode in stede, his Nigromancie
Calculacion, or Astronomie
What vailled hym, the heauenly mansions
Diuerse aspectes, or constellacions
The ende is not, but sorowe and mischance
Of hem that setten, her vtter affiance
In soche werkes, supersticious
Or triste on hem, he is vngracious
Recorde I take, shortly for to tell
Of this bishop, sonken doune to hell
Whose wofull ende, doun in euery coste
Soche a rumour, hath made in the hoste
That the noise, of this vncouth thyng
Is ironne, and come vnto the kyng
How this vengeance, is vnwarely fall

And he anon, made a Trompet call
All his people, out of the felde again
And euerichone, assembled vpon a plain
For the hyng, and also rounde hym aboute
Eueriche man, of his life in doubte
Full pitously, gan to sorowe and loure
Lest that the grounde, hem al would deuoure
And swelwen hem, in his derke caue
And thei ne come, no recure hem to saue
For neither force, nor manhode doeth auaille
In soche mischief, the value of a maille
For he that wisest, and could moste
To searche and seke, throughout the hoste
Amphiorar, when he leste wende
To hell is sonken, and coud him not defende
To hym the tyme, vnknowen and vnwiste
In whom whilom, was all the Grekes triste
Her holle comforte, and holle affiance
But all at ones, for this sodaine chance
And this mischief, thei gan hem to dispeire
Home to Grece, that thei will repeire
This was the purpose, of hem euerichone
And on the walles of Thebes, laie her sone
Reioysyng hem, of this vnhappie bye
Sowmyng thereby, greatly to recure
And on her toures, as thei loken out
Thei on Grekes, enuiously gan to shout
And of despite, and greate enmitee
Bad hem fooles, gone home to her countree
Sith thei han lost, her comfort and succour
Her false Prophete, and her Diuinour
Wherthrough her partie, greatly is empeired
And in this wise, the Grekes despeired
Dempte plainly, by tokens euident
This cace was fall, by some Enchantemēt
By witchecrafte, and by Sorcerie
Again whiche, maie be no remedie
Trustie defence, helpe ne succour
And when Adrastus, herde this clamour
He belie was againe this perturbance
To prouide, some manere cheuisance
And to him calleth, soche counsaill as he will
For life or death, that he might triste
Requiryng hem, but in wordes fewe
In this mischief, her mocion to shewe
And declare, by good auisement
What to Grekes, were moste expedient
To remedien, and make no delaie
The vncouth noise, and the greate affraie
That Grekes made, with clamor importune
And now and now, euer in one contune
And thei that were, moste manly and wise
Shortly saied, it were a cowardise
The high emprise, that thei haue vndertake
For drede of death, so sodainly to forsake
It were to hem, a perpetuelly shame
And after hindryng, to the Grekes name
And better it were, to euery warreour
Manly to die, with worship and honour
Then like a coward, with the life endure
For ones shamed, hard is to recure
His name ayein, of what estate he bee
And sith that Grekes, of olde antiquites
As of knighthod, who so liste take heede
Been so famous, and so worthie of deede
I know of newe, the shinyng of her fame
Eclipsed were, with any spot of blame
It were a thyng vncouth, for to here
Of whose renoun, the beames yet been clere
Through all the world, where that thei haue
And be not yet derked, ne defaced (pased
By no reporte, neither on sea nor londe
Thing to forsake, that thei tooke on honde
And by ensample, of our progenitours
That sometime were, so manly conquerours
To forre that we, into Grece wende
Of thyng begonne, let vs make an ende
And parte not, nor seuere from this toun
Till it be brought, to destruccion
Walles, toures, and crestes enbattailled
And for warre, strongly apparailled
Be first doune beate, that nothyng be sein
But all to gider, with the yearth plein
Be lowe laied, er that we resorte
That afterward, men maie of vs reporte
That we began, we knightly haue acheued
Upon our fone, with worship vnrepreued
This was the counsaill, shortly and thauise
Of the Grekes, that manly were and wise
That neuer afore, marked were with blame
And specially soche, as drede shame
And fully caste, what fortune euer tide
On her purpose, to the ende abide
That on no parte, her honoure not appal
And to this counsaill, Grekes one and all
Be condescended, and after beste redde
In stede ak hym, that was so late dedde
Amphiorar, buried depe in hell
That could whilom, to the Grekes tell
Of thynges hid, how it should fine aforne
In stede of whom, now thei haue hym lorne
Thei casten hym, wisely to purchace
Some prudent man, to occupie his place
That in soche thing, might hem moste auaile
Through misterie, of his diuinaile
By crafte of sorte, or of Prophecie
If any soche, thei couden out espie
Emong hem all, her purpose to attaine
As I finde, thei haue chocen twaine,

How

How the Grekes chosen a newe Diuinour in stede of Amphiorax.

Moste renouned, of hem euerichon
And Menalippus, called was that one
And Tredimus, ehe that other hight
And for he had, moste fauour in her sight
This Tredimus was chosen and preferred
And in her choies, Grekes haue not erred
For whilom, he learned his empryse
Of his Maister, Amphiorax the wise
And was disciple, vnder his doctrine
And of entent, that he shall termine
Unto Grekes, thinges that shall fall
As a bishop, mitred in his stall
Thei doen for hym, many an vncouth wise
In the temple, to Goddes Sacrifice
And thus confirmed, and stabled in his Se
A fewe daies, stoode in his degree
After her Maister, with full greate honour
Of Grekes chose, to be successour.

And all this tyme, in storie as it is tolde
Full great mischief, of hunger, thurst, & colde
And of Thebans, as thei issue out
Laie many one, slain in the route
On either parte, of fortune as thei mette
Her mortall swerdes, were so sharpe whette
And Tideus, emong hem of the toun
From daie to daie, plaieth the Lion
So cruelly, where so that he rode
That Theban non, afore his face abode
He made of hem, through his high renoun
So greate slaughter, and occision
That as the death, from his swerd thei fledde
For who came nerte, laied his life to wedde
He quitte hym self, so like a manly knight
That where he went, he put hem to the flight
And maugre hem, in his crueltee
He droue hem home, into her citee
Hem pursuyng, proudely to the gate
That vnto hym, thei beare so dedly hate
That thei hem cast, by sleight or some engine
To bring hym vnwarely, vnto his fine
And laied awaite, for hym daie and night
But alas, this noble manly knight.

How pitously this worthie Tideus, was slain with a quarell.

Upon a daie, as he gan hem chace
And mortally, made hem lese her place
And sued hem, almoste to the toun
That cause was, of his destruccion
For one alas, that on the walles stoode
Whiche all that daie, vpon hym abode
With a quarell, sharpe heded for his sake
Warned hym with a bowe of brake
So cruelly makyng none a reste
Till it was passed, bothe backe and breste
Wherthrough alas, there was none other red
Ne Lechecrafte, that he mote be ded
There maie thereof, be maked no delaies
And yet he was holden in his daies
The best knight, and moste manly man
As myne aucthour, well rehearse can
But for all that, was there no defence
Ayenst the stroke, of deathe violence
But Bochas write, ere he were fully dedde
He was by Grekes, presented with the hedde
Of him that yaue, his laste fatall wounde
And he was called, like as it is founde
Menalippus, I can none other tell
But thilke daie, Thebans ware so fell
Upon Grekes, that vnder her citee
The manly kyng, Parthonope
Slaine was, euene afore the gates
And there also, armed bright in plates
The famous kyng, called Ipomedon
The same daie, as made is mencion
On horsebacke, manly as he raught
At bridge, euen vpon the draught
Besette with preace, cruelly was drouned
And thus fortune, hath on Grekes trouned
On euery side, thilke vnhappie daie
But all the manere, tellen I ne maie
Of her fightyng, nor her slaughter in soth
More to declare, then myne aucthour doeth

But thilke daie, I finde as ye maie sene
When Phebus, was passed Meridene
And frō the South, west ward can him draw
His gilte tresses, to bathen in the wawe
The Theban king, fell Ethiocles
Roote and vnresse, and causer of vnpees
The slaughter of Grekes, whē that he beheld
Armed in stele, he came out into the felde
Full delirous, in that sodain heate
Polimite, in the fielde to mete
Singulerly, with hym to haue a do
For in this worlde, he hated no man so
He sat so nigh, printed in his harte
Whose comyng out, his brother gan aduarte
Upon his steede, in the opposite
And had againward, also greate delite
To meten hym, if fortune will assent
The enuious fire, so her hartes brent
Whiche hate was cancred, of vnkinde blood
And like twoo Tigres, in her rage wood
With speres sharpe, grounde for the nones
So as thei ran, and mette bothe at ones
Polimite, through plate, maile, and shielde
Rose him throughout, & smote hym into the felde
But whē he sawe, ỹ stremes of his blod
Raile aboute, in manere of a flood

All

All sodainly, of compassion
From his coursour, he a light a doune

How eche of the Theban brethren, slough other, euen tofore the citee.

And brotherly, with a pitous face
To saue his life, gan hym to vnbrace
And from his wounde, of newe affeccion
Full besie was, to pulle out the trunchon
Of loue onely, h[illegible]blyng hym right softe
But one alas, while he laie a lofte
Full iriously, Ethiocles the fell
Of all this sorowe, verie cours and well
With a daggere, in all his peines smarte
His brother rose, vnwarely to the harte
Whiche all her life, had be so wrothe
And thus the Thebans, were islawe bothe
At entree, euen afore the toun
But Grekes tho, been a vailed doun
In the field, the worthy knightes all
In Thebes lande, as soche thing shall
The crie a rose, when her kyng was dedde
And to the gates, armed foote and hedde
Out of the toun, came many a proude Thebā
And some of hem, vpon the walles ran
And gan to shoute, that pitee was to here
And thei without, of her life in werre
Without comforte, or consolacion
Dispeired, ronne home to the toun
And Grekes followen after at backe
That many one, that daie goeth to wracke
And as her fomen, proudely hem assaille
Ful many Grekes, both through plate & mail
Was shette through out, presyng at walles
And beaten of, with greate rounde balles
That here laie one, and an other yonder
And the noise, more hidous then thonder
Of gonneshotte, and of Arblates eke
So loude out rong, ẏ many a worthy Greke
There loste his life, thei were on hem so fell
And at gates shortly for to tell
As Grekes presen, to entre the citee
Thei of Thebes, in her crueltee
With hem mette, full furious and woode
And mortally, as thei again hem stoode
Men might see speres shiuer a sonder
That to beholde, it was a verie wonder
How thei foine, w̄ daggers & with swerdes
Through the viser, aumyng at berdes
Persyng also, through the rounde mailes
Rent out peces, of her auentailes
That nought auaileth, the mightie Gesseran
Through neck and breast, that the speres ran
Her weapenes were, so sharpe ground & whet
In their armour, that thei were not let
For there laie one, troden vnder foote
And yonder one perced, to the harte roote
Here lieth one dedde, and there another lame
This was the plaie, and the mortall game
Atwene Thebans, and the Grekes proude
That the swoughes, and the cries loude
Of hem that laie, and yolden vp the ghoste
Was herde full ferre, aboute in many a coste.

How all the riall blood, bothe of Grekes side and on the Citee side, islaine were vpon o daie.

And at gates, and saillyng of the wall
Islain was, all the blood riall
Bothe of the toune, and of the Grekes lande
And all the worthie knightes of her hande
And of Lordes, if I shall not feine
On Grekes side, a liue were but tweine
Kyng Adrastus, and Campaneus
That daie to hem, was so vngracious
And for Titan, Westred was so lowe
That no man might, vnnethes other knowe
Of the toune, thei shitte her gates faste
With barrers rounde imade for to laste
In whiche no wight, kerue maie ne hewe
And Adrastus, with a Grekes fewe
Repeired is, home to his tente
And all that night, he wasted hath and spent
For his vnhappe, in sorowe complainyng
And thei in Thebes, the nexte daie suyng
Her deuoire did, and her busie cure
To ordeine, and make a sepulture
For her kyng, islain in the fielde
And offer vp, his banner and his shielde
His helme, his swerde, and also his penon
Therein of golde, ibeaten a Dragon
High in the temple, that men might seen
And Jocasta, the infortunate Queen
Her sonnes death, sore gan complaine
And also eke, her yong doughters twaine
Bothe Imeine, and Antigone
Crien and wepe, that pitie was to se
But to her sorowes, there was no refute
And thus the citee, bare and destitute
Hauyng no wight, to gouerne hem ne guie
For dedde and slaine, was all her cheualrie
And no wight lefte, almoste in the toun
To reigne on hem, by succession
But for thei sawe, and tooken also hede
Without this, that thei had an hedde
In the citee, thei maie not dure long
For though it so be, that commons be strong
With multitude, and haue no gouernaille
Of an hedde, full lite it maie auaille
Therefore thei haue, vnto her soccour
Ichosen hem a newe gouernour.

How Creon the olde tiraunt, ichosen was to be kyng of Thebes.

An olde tiraunt, that called was Creon
Full acceptable, to hem euerichon
And crouned hym, without more lettyng
To reigne in Thebes, and to been her kyng
Although he had, no title by descent
But by free choise, made a Parlement
And thereto hym like, as it is founde
By her ligeance, of newe thei were bounde
For to be true, while the citee stood
To hym onely, with bodie and with good
Thus thei were swore, and sured euerichon
And he againward, to saue hem fro her foen
And hem defende, with all his full might
And mainteine hym, in all maner right
This was thaccorde, as in sentement
And in this while, hath Adrastus sent
From the siege, of Thebes the citee
A wounded knight, home to his countree
Through all Grece, plainly to declare
All the slaughter, and the euill fare
Of whiche Grekes, right as it is fall
And how that he, hath losse his lordes all
At more mischief, then any man can mouthe
And when this thing, was in Grece couthe
First to Argiue, and to Deiphile
And to the Ladies, eke in the countre
And of Prouinces, abouten adiacent
Thei came doune, all by one assent
Worthie Quenes, and with hem Duchesses
And other eke, that called were Countesses.

How all the Ladies of Grece, arraied hem toward Thebes.

And all the Ladies, and women of degree
Been assembled, in Arge the citee
Like as I rede, and all in clothes blake
That to beholde, the sorowe that thei make
It were a death, to any man a liue
And if I should, by and by discriue
Her tender wepyng, and her wofull sounes
Her complaintes, and lamentacions
Her oft swounyng, with faces dedde and pale
Thereof I might, make a newe tale
Almoste a daie, you to occupie
And as myne aucthour, doeth clerely certifie
Throughout all Grece, from all Regions
Out of citees, and riall tounes
Came all the ladies, and women of estate
Full heauie chered, and disconsolate
To this assemble, tofore ne as I you tolde
In purpose fully, her iourney for to holde
Toward Thebes, thei sorowfull creatures
There to bewaile, her wofull auentures
Tacquite hem self of trouth, and womanhed
To her Lordes, whiche in felde laie dedde
And as the storie, liketh to declare
All this iourney, thei went on foote bare
Like as thei had gone, on pilgrimage
In token of mournyng, barbed the visage
Wimpled echone, in burnet weedes
Not in chaires, drawen forthe with steedes
Nor on palfreies, blacke neither white
Like as myne aucthour, liketh to endite
To holden her waie, but barefoote forth thei
So faithfully, euerichone thei went (went
Through heuinesse, defaced of her hue
And as I finde, thei weren all true
Now was not that, a wonder for to see
So many true, out of o countree
At ones gadered, in a companine
And faithfull all, bookes can not lye
Nothe in her porte, and inward in meuyng
Unto my dome, it was an uncouthe thyng
Emong a thousande women, or tweine
Not to finde one, that could in harte feine
It was a merueile, not ofte seen tofore
For selde in feldes, groweth any corne
But if some wede, spryng vp there emong
Men allaie wines, when thei be to strong
But her trouth was meint, with non allaies
Thei were so true, founde at all assaies
And thei ne stinte, vpon her iourney
Till that thei come, there thei would be
Where Adrastus, written as I finde
Laie in his tente, all of colour Inde
And greatly merualled, when that he beheld
The nombre of hem, spred through al the feld
Clad all in blache, and barefoote euerichone
Out of his tente, he dressed hym anone
Upon his hande, the kyng Campaneus
Full trifle in harte, and face right pitous
Again the woman, forthe thei went in fere
And to beholde, the wofull heuie chere
The doolfull cries also, when thei met
The sorowfull sighes, in her breastes shet
The teares newe, distillyng on her faces
And so swounyng, in many sondrie places
When thei her Lordes, a liue not ne founde
But in ỹ feld, throughy girt w many a wound
Laie straught vpright, plainly to endite
With dedly yen, tourned vp the white
Who made sorowe, or felt her harte riue
For her Lorde, but the faire Argiue
Who can now wepe, but Deiphilee
Tideus for she ne might see
Whose constreintes, were so fell and keene
That Adrastus, might not susteine
To beholde, the Ladies so compleine
Wisshyng his harte, coruen were in tweine.

How the olde cursed Creon, will not suffre the bodies, neither to be brent, ne buried.

And

And yet alas, bothe euene and morowe
O thing there was, ỳ doubled all her sorowe
That olde Creon, fader of felonie
Ne would suffre, through his tyrannie
The dedde bodies, be buried neither brent
But with beastes, and houndes to be rent
He made hem all, vpon an heape be laied
Whereof the women, thrifte and euill apaied
For verie dolle, as it was no wonder
Her hartes felte, almoste riue a sonder
And as my Maister Chaucer, list to endite
All clad in blacke, with her wimples white
With greate honour, and due reuerence
In the temple, of the Goddesse Clemence
Thei bode the space, of a fourtenight
Till Theseus, the noble worthie knight
Duke of Athenes, with his cheualrie
Repeired hem, out of Feminie
And with hym ledde, full faire vpon to seen
Through his manhod, Ipolita the Queen
And her sister, called Emelie
And when these women, first gan espie
The worthie Duke, as he came ridyng
Kyng Adrastus, hem all conueyng
The women brought, vnto his presence
Whiche him besought, to yeue him audience
And all at ones, swounyng in the place
Full humbly, besoughten hym of grace
To rewe on hem, her harmes to redresse
But if ye liste, to se the gentillesse
Of Theseus, and how he hath hem borne
If ye remember, as ye haue herde to forne
Well rehearsed, at Depforde in the vale
In the beginnyng, of the knightes tale.

How the finall destruccion of Thebes, is compendiously rehersed in the knightes tale.

First how that he, when he herd hem speke
For verie routhe, he felte his harte breke
And her sorowes, when he gan aduarte
From his courser, doune anone he starte
Hem conforting, in full good entente
And in his armes, he hem all vp hente
The knightes tale, rehearsen euery dele
From poinct to poinct, if ye looke it wele
And how this Duke, without more abode
The same daie, toward Thebes rode
Full like in sothe, a worthie conquerour
And in his coste, of cheualrie the floure
And finally, to speaken of this thyng
With olde Creon, that was of Thebes kyng
How ỳ he faught, & slough him like a knight
And all his hoste, put vnto the flight
Yet as some auctheurs make mencion
Or Theseus entred into the toun
The women first, with pensis & with malles
With greate labour, beate doune the walles
And in her wityng, also as thei sain
Campaneus, was in the walles slain
With caste of stones, he was so ouerlade
For whom Adrastus, soche a sorowe made
That no man maie, release hym of his paine
And Iocasta, with her doughters twaine
Full wilfully oppressed, of her cheres
To Athenes, were sent as prisoners
What fell of hem, more can I not saine
But Theseus, myne auctheur write certaine
Out of the felde, ere he from Thebes went
He beate it doune, and the houses brent
The people slough, for all her criyng loude
He made her walles, and her toures proude
Rounde aboute, euen vpon a rowe
With the soile, to be laied full lowe
That nought was lefte, but the soile bare
And to the women, in releefe of her care.

How that Duke Theseus, delluered to the Ladies, the bodies of her Lordes.

The bodies of her Lordes, that were slaine
This worthie Duke, restored hath againe
But what should I, any lenger dwell
The olde rites, by and by to tell
Nor the obsequies, in order to deuise
Nor declare, the maner and the gise
How the bodies, were to asshes brent
Nor of the gommes, in the flaume spent
To make the aire, swetter of reles
Of frankencence, Mirre and aloes
Nor how the women, rounde aboute stood
Some with milke, and some also with blood
And some of hem, with vrnes made of gold
When the asshes, fully were made cold
To enclose hem, of greate affeccion
And beare hem home, vnto her region
And how that other, full dedly of her looke
For loue onely, of the bones tooke
Hem to kepe, for a remembraunce
That to reherce, euery obseruaunce
That was doen, in the fires bright
The wake plaies, duryng all the night
Nor of the wrastling, tellyng poinct by point
Of hem that were, naked and anoinct
How eueriche other, lugge can and shake
Ne how the women, haue her leue take
Of Theseus, with full greate humblesse
Thankyng hym, of his high worthinesse
That hym liste, vpon her wo to rewe
And how that he, his fredome to renewe
With the women, of his high largesse
Sparted hath eke, of his richesse
And how this Duke, Theseus hem forsoke
And to Athenes, the right waie tooke

With

With Laurer crouned, in signe of victorie
And the palme of conquest, and of glorie
Did his honour, duely vnto Marte
And how the women wept, when thei parte.

How kyng Adrastus with the Ladies, repeired home ayein to Arge.

With kyng Adrastus, home ayein to Arge
To tellen all, it were to greate a charge
And eke also, as ye shall vnderstande
At ginnyng, I toke no more on hande
By my promise, in conclusion
But to rehearse, the destruccion
Of mightie Thebes, and no more
And thus Adrastus, with his lockes hore
Still abode, in Arge his citee
Vnto his ende, ye get no more of me
Sauf as myne aucthour liketh to compile
After that, he liued but a while
For he was olde, ere the siege began
And thought and sorowe, so vpon hym ran
The whiche in sothe, shorted hath his daies
And tyme set, death maketh no delaies
And all his ioye, passed was and gone
For of his lordes, aliue was not one
But slain at Thebes, ye knowen all the cas
And when this kyng, in Arge buried was
Full rially, with greate solempnitee
It was accompted, in bookes ye maie see.

Fower hundred yere, to fore the foundacion of Rome, was the Citee of Thebes destroied.

CCCC. yere, as made is mencion
To fore the buildyng and fundacion
Of greate Rome, so roiall and so large
When the Ladies, departed from Arge
To her countrees, full triste and desolate
Lo here the fine, of conteke and debate
Lo here the might, of Mars ẏ froward sterre
Lo what it is, to beginne a werre
How it concludeth, ensample ye maie see
First of the Grekes, & sith of the Thebans cite
For either parte, hath matter to complain
And in her strief, ye maie se thinges twain

How all the worthie bloode of Grece destroied was at siege, and the citee brought to nought, to finall losse of both parties.

The worthie blood, of all Grece spilte
And Thebes eke, of Amphion first bilte
Without recure, brought to ruine
And with the soile, made plain as any line
To wildernesse tourned, and deserte
And Grekes eke, fall into pouerte
Bothe of her men, and also of her good
For finally, all the gentill blood
Was shed out there, her woundes wer so wide
To losse finall, vnto either side
For in the warre, is none excepcion
Of high estate, ne lowe condicion
But as fate, and fortune bothe in fere
List to dispose, with her double chere.

Bellona, Goddesse is of battaille.

And Bellona, the goddesse in her chare
A forn prouideth, wherfore euery mā be ware
Vnauised, a warre to beginne
For no man wot, who shall lese or winne
And harde it is, when either parte leseth
And doubtlesse, neither of hem cheseth
That thei must, in all soche mortall rage
Maugre her luste, felen greate damage
It maie not be, by mannes might restreined
And warre in sothe, was neuer ordeined
But for sinfull folkes, to chastise
And as the Bible, truely can deuise.

How that warre first began in heauen, by the high pride and surquedie of Lucifer.

High in heauen, of pride and surquedie
Lucifer fader of Enuie
The olde Serpent he Leuiathan
Was the first, that euer warre began
When Michael, the heauenly champion
With his feres, venquished the Dragon
And to helle, caste hym doune full lowe
The whiche Serpent, hath the Coccle sowe
Through all yearth, of enuie and debate
That vnnethes, is there none estate
Without strief, can liue in charitee
For euery man, of high and lowe degree
Enuieth now, that other should thriue
And grounde & cause, why that men so striue
Is couetise, and false Ambicion
That eueriche would, haue dominacion
Ouer other, and trede hym vnder foote
Whiche of all sorowe, ginnyng is and roote
And Christ recordeth, rede, looke, & ye maie se
For lacke of loue, what mischief there shall be

Surget gens contra gentem. Luce. xxj.

For o people, as he doeth deuise
Ayenst an other, of hate shall arise
And after telleth, what diuisions
There shall be, betwene regions
Eueriche busie, other to oppresse
And all soche strief, as he beareth witnesse
Kalendes been, I take his worde to borowe
And a ginnyng, of mischief and of sorowe
Men haue it founde, by experience
But the venim, and the violence
Of strief of warre, of conteke and of debate
That maketh londes, bare and desolate
Shall be proscripte, and voided out of place
And Martes swerdes, shall no more manace

For his spere, greuous to sustaine
Shall now no more, whetted be so kene
For ye no more, shall his hauberke shake
But loue and peace, shall in hartes awake
And Charitie, bothe in length and breade
Of newe shall, her bright beames spreade
Through grace onely, in diuers nacions
For to reforme, atwene Regions
Peace and quiete, concorde and vnitee
And ye that is bothe, one, twoo, and three
The three in one, and souereine lorde of pees
Whiche in this exile, for our sake ches
For loue onely, our troubles to termine
For to be borne, of a pure birgine
And let vs praie, to hym that is moste good
That for mankinde, shadde his harte blood
Through beseching, of that heauenly quene
Wife and moder, and maiden clene
To sende vs peace, in this life here present
And of our sinnes, parfite amendement
And ioye eternall, when we hens wende
And of my tale, this I make an ende.

Here now endeth, as ye maie see
The destruction, of Thebes the Citee.

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